

Kifayat Ullah
Al-Kashshāf

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Kifayat Ullah

Al-Kashshāf

Al-Zamakhsharī's Mu'tazilite Exegesis of the Qur'ān

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To Kahkashan

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Preface

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Introduction

Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī is one of the last widely known and outstanding Ḥanafī Mu‘tazilite scholars who made important contributions in the fields of Qur’ānic exegesis, traditions, theology, jurisprudence, grammar, lexicography and literature. Mu‘tazilism continued to thrive in Khwārazm, at least until the second half of the eighth/fourteenth century, while in the rest of the Muslim world it had already declined.¹

Al-Zamakhsharī was born in 467/1075 at Zamakhshar in Khwārazm, and died in 538/1144 in Jurjāniyya, where he was buried. Al-Zamakhsharī travelled for purposes of education and visited Mecca twice and stayed there for a period of approximately twelve years. His first visit took place sometime between 500/1106 and 518/1124, and his second visit was in 526/1131 when he stayed for seven years, hence he was given the honorific title of *Jār Allāh* (Neighbor of God).

The biographical dictionaries mention that al-Zamakhsharī acquired his education from approximately eleven scholars, and studied exegesis, traditions, theology, jurisprudence, grammar, lexicography, and literature. These sources also identify about twenty-six of his students. In most of the cases they mention what students studied with or transmitted from al-Zamakhsharī, but in some cases information regarding their fields of study is not available. His command over Arabic was superb, and unparalleled. He was an outstanding scholar of his time who excelled in many sciences. He composed approximately fifty works during his lifetime.

In the year 512/1118 al-Zamakhsharī suffered a serious illness (*nāhika*) and warning (*mundhira*).² He made a covenant with God that if he were cured from the illness he would lead the life of guidance (*al-hudā*), desist from the desires (*al-hawā*) and devote his lifetime in pursuit of the readings of the Qur’ān, the tradition and jurisprudence.³

Primarily, al-Zamakhsharī’s fame rests upon the Qur’ān commentary of *al-Kashshāf ‘an ḥaqā’iq al-tanzīl wa ‘uyūn al-ghawāmiḍ fī wujūh al-ta’wīl*, which he began to write upon his arrival in Mecca in 526/1132, and completed in 528/1134. Al-Zamakhsharī’s commentary contains a quintessence of Mu‘tazilite

1 W. Madelung, The Theology of al-Zamakhsharī,” *Actas del XII Congreso de la U.E.A.I. (Malaga, 1984)* (Madrid: Union Europeenne d’Arabisants et d’Islamisants, 1986), 485; W. Madelung, “The Spread of Maturidism and the Turks,” in *Actas IV Congresso de Estudos Arabes e Islamicos Coimbra-Lisboa* 1968 (Leiden: Brill, 1971), 116.

2 Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *Maqāmāt* (Miṣr: Maṭba‘a al-Tawfīq, 1906), 5.

3 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Maqāmāt*, 6–7.

doctrine which was adopted from the earlier Mu'tazilite exegetes; however, frequently he presented his own views. He mentions the views of both the schools – Baṣra and Baghdād, but does not associate himself to any one of them. He was familiar with the Mu'tazilite theology of Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025) and also studied the doctrine of Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 436/1044) which is evident in his Mu'tazilite creed *al-Minhāj fī uṣūl al-dīn*.⁴

Wilferd Madelung describes that, "For the Mu'tazilites, *al-Kashshāf* represents the peak of intellectual achievement in Qur'ān commentary."⁵ According to Andrew Rippin, "The distinctiveness of al-Zamakhsharī's Qur'ān commentary lies in his Mu'tazilī theological leanings...The Mu'tazilī doctrines of the unity and justice of God and the consequent ideas of the human free will and the need to deanthropomorphize the Qur'ān become the prime themes of the distinctive passages of interpretation."⁶

Since its inception, *al-Kashshāf* has been subject to both explication and orthodox Sunnī criticism which centered on the basic principles of the Mu'tazilite theology. Those who have denounced and criticized *al-Kashshāf* include leading scholars of Sunnī orthodoxy. Yet, at the same time, al-Zamakhsharī's *tafsīr* was cited, adopted, and commented upon by the orthodox community and there are an almost endless number of glosses, superglosses, and supercommentaries on it. The work by al-Bayḍāwī (d. ca 685/1286), *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl* is the most famous attempt to distill the essence of al-Zamakhsharī's work while attempting to omit those views considered reprehensible to Sunnī orthodoxy. Ibn al-Munayyir (d. 683/1284) in his *Kitāb al-Intiṣāf min al-Kashshāf* refuted al-Zamakhsharī's Mu'tazilite interpretations. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209) in his *Tafsīr al-kabīr*, Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī (d. 745/1344) in his *Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406) in his *Muqaddima* and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) all criticized al-Zamakhsharī's Mu'tazilite views.⁷

Modern scholarship on al-Zamakhsharī is divided on the extent to which his *tafsīr* expresses Mu'tazilite doctrine and approach. One study by Lupti Ibrahim compares the significance of al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī in Muslim theology and examines their works *al-Kashshāf* and *Anwār al-tanzīl* which represent the views of the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites respectively. His study concludes that al-Zamakhsharī as a Mu'tazilite gives priority to reason over revelation,

⁴ W. Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EI² Supplement*, 12:840 – 41.

⁵ Madelung, *Theology of al-Zamakhsharī*, 485.

⁶ Rippin, "al-Zamakhsharī," *ER*, 16:554.

⁷ Madelung, *Theology of al-Zamakhsharī*, 485.

whereas, al-Bayḍāwī as an Ashʿarite maintains that revelation has priority over reason.”⁸

Another study written by Fazlur Rahman, within the framework of the Muʿtazilites’ five principles, examines al-Zamakhsharī’s various techniques to substantiate his Muʿtazilite views, such as rational orientation, variant readings of the Qurʾān, support from the Prophetic traditions, usage of similitudes and parables, extension of certain words’ meanings and syntactical methods. He concludes that al-Zamakhsharī’s unshakable conviction in the Muʿtazilite theology is reflected in his tafsīr of *al-Kashshāf*.⁹

Michael Schub states that according to Henri Fleisch, al-Zamakhsharī’s concise grammatical magnum opus *al-Mufaṣṣal* deals with almost all of the topics included in Sibawayh’s *Kitāb*.¹⁰ Schub’s main thesis is that al-Zamakhsharī significantly and extensively treats these topics covered in *al-Mufaṣṣal* in his commentary of *al-Kashshāf*. Al-Zamakhsharī is an excellent linguist who examines the Qurʾānic text in the light of relevant context and he evaluates various possible readings, or attempts a diachronic explanation. He is an innovative and critical analyst of textual material and does not hesitate to break with the accepted grammatical wisdom of his time. He concludes that al-Zamakhsharī provides many extra-linguistic bits of information which are potentially very illuminating. He is especially insightful in analyzing the syntactic problems. Although al-Zamakhsharī tends to look at verses of the Qurʾān bearing on theological issues through the Muʿtazilite perspective, his view of those verses containing grammatical problems is, generally speaking, scientific in that it is unbiased as to meaning.¹¹

Andrew Lane argues in his study that “while al-Zamakhsharī may be well known for his ‘Muʿtazilite’ commentary on the Qurʾān, exegesis in general and Muʿtazilism in particular are hardly representative of his literary output... al-Zamakhsharī was neither a theologian nor even a religious scholar in the more limited sense of the word.”¹²

⁸ Lupti Ibrahim, *The Theological Questions at Issue between al-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍāwī with special reference to al-Kashshāf and Anwār al-tanzīl*. Ph.D. Thesis (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 1977), v.

⁹ Fazlur Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr al-Kashshāf: ek taḥlīlī jāʿiza* (ʿAligarh: ʿAligarh Muslim University, 1982), 482–88.

¹⁰ Henri Fleisch, *Traité de philologie arabe* (Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1990), 1:40.

¹¹ Michael B. Schub, *Linguistic Topics in al-Zamakhsharī’s Commentary on the Qurʾān*. Ph.D. Dissertation (Berkeley: University of California, 1977), 1–34.

¹² Andrew J. Lane, *A Traditional Muʿtazilite Qurʾān Commentary: The Kashshāf of Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144)* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006), 46.

My book is divided into two parts. The first part, which consists of three chapters, deals with al-Zamakhsharī's biography, al-Kashshāf, and al-Zamakhsharī's methodology of *tafsīr*. The first chapter is devoted to the biography of al-Zamakhsharī, which provides information about his early life, education, teachers from whom he received his education and the fields of studies, his students, the works composed by him, his travels and visits to Mecca, and his intellectual crisis.

The second chapter deals with the transmission of *al-Kashshāf* after its completion, and its manuscripts. According to Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Īsā b. Muṭayr al-Yamanī, Abū al-Ma'ālī Yaḥyā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī al-Shaybānī, a *qāḍī* in Mecca, transmitted *al-Kashshāf* from al-Zamakhsharī to his nephew Abū al-Ma'ālī Mājid b. Sulaymān b. al-Fihri (d. 655/1257), who then transmitted it to others.¹³

The earliest manuscript was copied only four years after al-Zamakhsharī's death and fourteen years after he had finished the commentary in Mecca. *Al-Fihris al-shāmil* mentions 843 manuscripts, out of which 443 bear the date or century in which they were copied and they are available in various libraries and museums of the world.¹⁴ Out of 443 dated manuscripts, Lane has analyzed 250 manuscripts most of which are in Istanbul. No other book in the history of *tafsīr* has been commented upon in the forms of *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars* more than *al-Kashshāf*. Ḥājji Khalifa (d. 1067/1657) in his *Kashf al-zunūn* lists approximately fifty commentaries.¹⁵ *Al-Fihris al-shāmil* mentions seventy-three *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars*.¹⁶ According to Lane, more than eighty scholars have written *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars*. Some of these commentaries have been written by well-known scholars, while other scholars are known by the names on the manuscripts of the *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars* that have survived, although some works on the *Kashshāf* bear no name at all. The issue of *khalq al-Qur'ān* and scholars' opinions about *al-Kashshāf* are also discussed.

The third chapter describes al-Zamakhsharī's methodology of *tafsīr*. Despite the fact that his *tafsīr* follows the text of the Qur'ān from the beginning to the

13 Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn fī tā'rīkh al-balad al-amīn*, ed. Fu'ād Sayyid (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1967), 7:138–39.

14 *Al-Fihris al-shāmil li-l-turāth al-'Arabī al-Islāmī al-makhtūṭ: 'ulūm al-Qur'ān makhtūṭat al-tafsīr*, ed. Al-Majma' al-Malakī li-Buḥūth al-Haḍāra al-Islāmī ('Ammān: Mu'assasat Āl al-Bayt, 1987), 2:368–510.

15 Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh Mullā Kātib al-Chelbī Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn 'an asāmi' al-kutub wa-al-funūn* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1992), 2: 1475–84.

16 *Al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:511–28.

end, and he uses some of the elements of a traditional Qur'ān commentary, such as “interpretation of the Qur'ān by means of the Qur'ān” (*tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi-al-Qur'ān*), use of the *aḥādith*, and the variant readings of the Qur'ān (*qirā'āt*), his exegetical techniques differ from the standard format of traditional exegesis. The main characteristics of his *tafsīr* are: emphasis on the perspicuous (*muḥkamam*) and ambiguous (*mutashābih*) verses, significance of science of expression (*‘ilm al-ma‘ānī*) and science of semantics and syntax (*‘ilm al-bayān*), question and answer format (*as’ila wa-ajwiba*), and extensive grammatical use. These components of exegesis are uniquely applied by him throughout *al-Kashshāf*.

The second part of the book consists of five chapters, and examines and analyzes al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*, within the context of the Mu'tazilites' five principles (*uṣūl al-khamsa*). Muḥammad b. Hudhayl b. 'Ubayd Allāh b. Makhūl al-'Abdī al-'Allāf Abū al-Hudhayl (d. 226/841) is purported to have been the first who created a reliable dogmatic framework and defined *al-uṣūl al-khamsa* “the five principles” of the Mu'tazilites, which he developed in his *Kitāb al-Hujja*. He considered that these principles were indispensable for a Mu'tazilite identity, and determined the structure of their theological works.¹⁷ Later on, Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī (d. 319/913), and Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Jubbā'ī (d. 303/915) formulated coherent theological frameworks. 'Abd al-Salām Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī (d. 321/933) son of Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī further systematized and refined the theological doctrines. The last person, who developed independent theological views, was Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī; however, all the refinements centered within the context of the five principles of the Mu'tazilites.¹⁸

The fourth chapter is a detailed analysis of the first fundamental principle: “the unity of God” (*al-tawḥīd*), which is the most important thesis of their doctrine and the source of the other principles. According to them, God is one and unique and He has no likeness and comparison with anyone. God is beyond time and place; He is not a body at all but only “something”, a being that cannot be perceived by the senses but is exclusively known through revelation or through reason. God is mentioned in the Qur'ān as: “There is no other like

17 Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. 'Alī al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab wa-ma'ādin al-jawhar*, (Beirut: Dār al-Andalus, 1965), 3:221–23; Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Malaṭī, *al-Tanbih wa-al-radd 'alā ahl al-ahwā wa-al-bid'*, ed. Muḥammad Zāhid b. al-Ḥasan al-Kawtharī (Beirut: Maktabat al-Ma'ārif, 1968), 38–39; Maymūn b. Muḥammad al-Nasafī, *Baḥr al-kalām*, ed. Walī al-Dīn Muḥammad Ṣāleḥ al-Farfūr (Damascus: Maktaba Dār al-Farfūr, 2000), 227–28.

18 D. Gimaret, “Mu'tazila,” *EF*, 7:783–93.

Him” (*laysa ka-mithlihi shay*’),¹⁹ and “There is no one comparable to Him” (*walam yakun lahu kufuwan aḥad*).²⁰

The Muʿtazilites deny God’s description anthropomorphically in any form, such as direction, place, image, body, face, hand, eye, domain, movement, extinction, change, or feeling.²¹ They consider the anthropomorphic verses in the Qurʾān as allegorical or figurative expressions to symbolize God’s attributes and actions. They deal with such verses by the method of *taʿwīl* or metaphorical interpretation. This chapter also discusses the issues of createdness of the Qurʾān (*khalq al-Qurʾān*) and the vision of God (*ruʾyat Allāh*).

The fifth chapter offers a comprehensive study of the second principle: “God’s justice” (*al-ʿadl*). The concepts of “grace” (*lutf*), the “best” (*aṣḥaḥ*), “guidance and going astray” (*hidāya wa iqlāl*), “sealing of the hearts” (*khatm al-qulūb*) and God does not will any evil but good (*anna Allāh lā yurīd sharr bal yurīd al-khayr*) are elaborated.

The sixth chapter describes the third principle: “the promise and the threat” (*al-waʿd wa al-waʿd*). The concept of “constraint” (*iljāʾ*) which is intended to solve the issue of the discrepancy between what God wills people to do and what they actually do; and the concept of “the nullification and the atonement” (*al-iḥbāt wa al-takfīr*) which is related to obedience (*tāʿa*) and disobedience (*maʿ-ṣiya*) are discussed in detail. In addition, the viewpoints of the Muʿtazilites and al-Zamakhsharī with regard to “repentance” (*tawba*), “forgiveness” (*ghufrān*), and “intercession” (*shafaʿa*) are illustrated.

The seventh chapter illustrates the fourth principle: “the position between the two positions” (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*), literally meaning or commonly referred to as “the intermediate position between belief and unbelief.” The definition of “belief” (*īmān*), classification of sins into major (*kabāʾir*) and minor (*ṣaghāʾir*) are elaborated.

The eighth chapter deals with the fifth principle: “enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong” (*al-amr bi al-maʿrūf wa al-nahy ʿan al-munkar*). The three main features of this principle: consistency in the Muʿtazilites’s views, homogeneity of the principle over space and time, and activism in varying

¹⁹ Qurʾān, 42:11.

²⁰ Qurʾān, 112:4.

²¹ Sabine Schmidkte, *A Muʿtazilite Creed of az-Zamahṣharī (d. 538/1144) [al-Minhāḡ fī usūl al-dīn]* ed. and trans. (Stuttgart: Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes 51/4, Deutsche Morgenlandische Gesellschaft – F. Steiner, 1997), 16–18.

degrees,²² as well as the two viewpoints for its implementation are elaborated in greater detail.

Finally, I have analyzed al-Zamakhsharī's interpretations in order to see whether and in what manner he defended some or all of the five principles of the Mu'tazilite theology. I selected those verses where anthropomorphisms need clarification as well as verses that are known to be points of contention between the Mu'tazilites and Sunnī orthodoxy.

²² Michael Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 224–26.

Chapter 1 Al-Zamakhsharī's Biography

1 Al-Zamakhsharī's Early Life

Biographical dictionaries provide very little information about al-Zamakhsharī's life. Jane Dammen McAuliffe describes that, "The biographical material on al-Zamakhsharī strikes very few personal notes."¹ In this book, the information derived from more than twenty-five biographical sources, spans a period of eight centuries from Ibn al-Anbārī's (d. 577/1181) *Nuzhat al-alibbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-udabā'* to Khayr al-Dīn Ziriklī's (d. 1395/1976) *al-A'lām. Qāmūs tarājim li-ashhar al-rijāl wa-al-nisā' min al-'Arab wa-al-musta'ribīn wa-al-mustashriqīn*.

Al-Zamakhsharī's full name is Maḥmūd b. 'Umar b. Muḥammad b. 'Umar, his *kunya* (patronymic) is Abū al-Qāsim and his *alqāb* (honorific titles) are *Jār Allāh* (neighbor of God), and *Fakhr Khawārm* (Glory of Khawārm). The *nisba* al-Zamakhsharī is derived from the place Zamakhshar in Khwārazm, where he was born on Rajab 27, 467/March 18, 1075.²

Al-Muqaddasī (d. 380/990) describes that, "Zamakhshar is a small city having a fortress, a ditch, a prison, and gates braced with iron, and bridges are raised every night, and a main street that crosses through the city. The mosque is very elegant which is at the end of the market."³ Al-Sam'ānī (d. 562/1167) mentions that, "Zamakhshar is one of the big villages of Khwārazm which is equivalent to a small city."⁴ Yāqūt (d. 626/1229) quotes al-Zamakhsharī that he said,

1 Jane Dammen McAuliffe, *Qur'ānic Christians: An Analysis of Classical and Modern Exegesis* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 51.

2 Jamāl al-Dīn 'Alī b. Yūsūf al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt 'ala anbā' al-nuḥāt*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub wa-al-Wathā'iq al-Qawmiyya, 2005), 3:268; Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyat al-wu'āt fī ṭabaqāt al-lughawiyyīn wa-al-nuḥāt*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Maṭba'at 'Isā al-Bāb al-Ḥalabī, 1965), 2:279; 'Izz al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1965), 11:97; Aḥmad b. Muṣṭafā b. Khalīl Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda wa-misbāḥ al-siyāda fī mawḍu'at al-'ulum*, ed. Kāmil Kāmil Bakrī and 'Abd al-Wahhāb Abū al-Nūr (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha, 1968), 2:98.

3 Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Bannā' al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī ma'rīfat al-aqlīm* (Beirut: Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1987), 230.

4 'Abd al-Karīm b. Muḥammad b. Manṣūr al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1998), 3:181–82; 'Izz al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Lubāb fī tahdhīb al-ansāb* (Baghdād: Maktabat al-Muthannā, 1970), 2:74; Shams al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Abū Bakr Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1968), 5:168; Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ḥayyī al-Laknawī, *al-Fawā'id al-bahiyya fī tarājim al-Ḥanafīyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Salām al-Nu'mānī (Banāras: Maktabat Nadwat

“As far as my place of birth is concerned, it is one of the unknown villages of Khwārazm.”⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī died on Dhū al-Ḥijja 8, 538/June 12, 1144 in Jurjāniyya, where he was buried. Jurjāniyya, also known as Gurganj, capital of Khurāsān is located on the bank of the Jayhūn River. It was ranked after Kath as the second principal city, and had four gates and a large palace near the Bāb al-Ḥajjāj, on the edge of a huge market place and consisted of an outer and an inner city.⁶

Although of Persian origin, al-Zamakhsharī's command over Arabic was superb, and unparalleled. He was always motivated in his scholarship to serve and promote the Arabic language. He always taught his students in Arabic, and used Persian only for those who were beginners in their studies.⁷ Arabic was, in his view, the most perfect language which God had preferred to all languages as He preferred the Qur'ān and Islam over all scripture and religions.⁸ He was a strong opponent of the *shu'ūbiyya*, who held the view that Persians were superior to the Arabs.⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī was lame (*a'raj*) because one of his feet had been amputated. There are five different versions, which describe how this may have happened. According to the first version, when he was a small child, he fell from a roof (*saṭḥ*) and broke his foot. It became bent and was amputated.¹⁰ The second version states that while he was traveling through Khwārazm, “he got frost-bite in an extreme cold weather” (*aṣābahu thalj kathīr wa-bard shadīd*) and his foot “fell off” (*saqaṭa*).¹¹ The third version mentions that his foot was stung by an

al-Ma'arīf, 1967), 167–68; Muḥammad Bāqir b. Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt fī aḥwāl al-ʿulamā wa-al-sādāt*, ed. Asad Allāh (Tehrān: Maktabat Ismāʿīliyyān, 1970), 8:119.

5 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Yaʿqūb b. ʿAbd Allāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ irshād al-arīb ilā maʾrifat al-adīb*, ed. Iḥsān ʿAbbās. (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 1993), 3:147.

6 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Yaʿqūb b. ʿAbd Allāh Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī al-Rūmī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*. (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1957), 2:122; B. Spuler, “Gurgandj,” *IE²*, 2:1141.

7 Darwish al-Jundī, *al-Naẓm al-Qurʾān fī Kashshāf al-Zamakhsharī* (Cairo: Dār Nahḍa Miṣr lil-Ṭabʾ wa al-Nashr, 1969), 3.

8 Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *IE² Supplement*, 12:840–41.

9 Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), 2:362.

10 ʿAbd al-Salām b. Muḥammad al-Andarāsbanī, “Fī Sirat al-Zamakhsharī Jār Allāh,” ed. ʿAbd al-Karīm al-Yāfi, *Majallat Majmaʾ al-lughā al-ʿArabiyya bi-Dimishq*, 57/3 (1402/1982), 368.

11 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 5:169; Taqī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Fāsi, *al-ʿIqd al-thamīn fī tāʾrīkh al-balad al-amīn* ed. Fuʾād Sayyid (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1967), 7:140–41; ʿAbd al-Ḥayyī b. Aḥmad Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab fī akhbār man dhahab* (Beirut: Maktab al-Tijārī lil-Ṭabaʾ wa-al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzīʾ, 1966), 4:119; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Tāʾrīkh al-Islām wa-wafayāt al-mashāhīr waʾl-aʿlām*, ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salām Tadmūrī (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1991–2000), 36:489.

insect and later it had to be cut off due to an abscess developing on the foot.¹² The fourth version describes that on his way to Bukhārā; he fell from his horse and broke his foot. Afterwards, it became so painful that he had the foot removed.¹³ Finally, when al-Zamakhsharī was visiting Baghdād, Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Dāmaghānī (d. 540/1145), the Ḥanafite jurist asked him about his foot. He replied that the cause of his foot amputation was his mother's prayer. He narrated that when he was a small child he caught a sparrow and tied its foot with a piece of thread. The sparrow managed to escape and took refuge in a wall's hole. He tried to pull the bird out of the hole but its foot severed by the thread. His mother saw the incident and said, "May God sever your foot as you severed its foot." Al-Zamakhsharī concluded that, "My mother's benediction got me this." Al-Zamakhsharī got his amputated foot replaced by a wooden one, which he used to hide by wearing a long cloak, so that people would not consider him lame.¹⁴ He always carried with him an official certificate (*maḥḍar*) signed by many witnesses who knew the circumstances and facts of his foot, to avoid suspicion or doubt of the people.¹⁵ The reason that he had to carry an official certificate was that it might be suspected that his foot was amputated as punishment for some crime.

2 Al-Zamakhsharī's Education

Al-Andarasbānī and Ṭashkubrīzāda mention that al-Zamakhsharī's father was a scholar (*imām*) in the village of Zamakhshar and he taught him the Qur'ān. His father wanted him to learn tailoring since he was handicapped. However, al-Zamakhsharī requested that he send him to Jurjāniyya for more education, to which he agreed. He studied and acquired knowledge from a number of scholars (*asātidha*, *shuyūkh*, *masahā'ikh*). In Jurjāniyya, the brother of Abū al-Faṭḥ b. 'Alī b. al-Ḥarith al-Bayyā'ī saw his good handwriting and employed him as his secretary.¹⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī travelled to Bukhārā when he reached the age to acquire further knowledge, he continued studies outside of his village.¹⁷

¹² Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280.

¹³ Al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:268.

¹⁴ Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:99; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:268; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:169–70; al-Fāsī, *ʿIqd al-thamīn*, 7:140–1; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 4:119.

¹⁵ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2688; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3: 268; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:169; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 4:119.

¹⁶ According to George Makdisi, "For the *madrassa* in eleventh-century Baghdād exercised an undeniably strong attraction, especially on those who had not the means for the leisure of

3 Al-Zamakhsharī's Teachers

All the biographical dictionaries and *ṭabaqāt* works mention that al-Zamakhsharī acquired his education from a number of scholars. However, most of the information available about these scholars is scanty. There are approximately eleven names which have been mentioned in the sources who were his teachers. Sometimes, information is available about the area of studies in which they were specialized, while in other cases it is not mentioned at all.

According to al-Andarasbānī, al-Zamakhsharī, when he was already a famous authority on the Qur'ān exegesis, became associated with two prominent theologians of Khwārazm – Abū Manṣūr¹⁸ and Rukn al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. al-Malāḥimī al-Uṣūlī (d. 536/1141), who was known as *farīd al-ʿaṣr* (unique in his time) in the field of theology. Al-Zamakhsharī studied theology with him. Besides being al-Zamakhsharī's teacher, Ibn al-Malāḥimī was also his student and studied with him exegesis.¹⁹ The evidence of al-Zamakhsharī's close relationship with Ibn al-Malāḥimī is supported by the elegiac verses composed by him on the occasion of the latter's death.²⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī wrote a brief summary of his theological opinions entitled *Kitāb al-Minhāj fī uṣūl al-dīn*. In his Mu'tazilite creed, he was largely influenced by the doctrine of Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, which is supported by the text. Throughout the book, he usually refrains from expressing his own preference

study. To devote oneself to study meant to sacrifice the opportunity of monetary gain from plying a trade or profession. Prior to the big *madrasas*, both needy professors and needy students had to gain their livelihood outside the field of education. The professor had to hire himself out as copyist for wages. Those with a handsome handwriting gained large sums of money as copyists. This profession was not by any means left to the very greatest calligraphers, such as the Ibn Muqlas and the Ibn al-Bauwābs; others, whose primary interest was elsewhere, but who had a certain talent for calligraphy, could at times gain enough to become rich. But the great majority could only eke out a living with this time-consuming job which, however, had the advantage of keeping them close to their primary interest in helping them to learn their texts," George Makdisi, "Muslim Institutions of Learning in Eleventh-Century Baghdad," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 24 (1961), 52.

17 Al-Andarasbānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:170; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:100.

18 Al-Andarasbānī mentions his name Imām Abū Manṣūr and "the Shaykh Abū Manṣūr master of theology and preacher of the people of the Khwārazm" (*al-Shaykh Abū Manṣūr ṣāhib al-uṣūl wa wā'iz ahl al-Khwārazm*). It seems that he is most likely the Shaykh al-Islām Abū Manṣūr Naṣr al-Ḥārithī, one of al-Zamakhsharī's teachers mentioned by his nephew. See al-Andarasbānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368, 379; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2688.

19 Al-Andarasbānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368, 379, 382; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda* 2:100.

20 Al-Andarasbānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 382.

with regard to the conflicting views of various schools on a question without ever entering the controversies. However, at some places when he indicates his opinion, it seems that he is in agreement with the views of Ibn al-Malāḥimī. The theologians most of the time mentioned by names are Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī and Abū Ḥāshim al-Jubbā'ī – “the two *shaykhs*” (*al-shaykhān*), and Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār is referred to only once. Madelung states that,

Al-Zamakhsharī's attitude to the Mu'tazila and their schools thus seems well consistent with what is known of his career. He had most likely been a Mu'tazili from his youth. Then he was attracted by the teaching of al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī, representative of the Bahash-miyya, perhaps in particular because of al-Ḥākim's authority in Qur'ān exegesis. He probably visited Jishum, though apparently after al-Ḥākim's death, and received his works from a student of his. Later he became closely associated with Ibn al-Malāḥimī, the Kawāzamiān renewer of the doctrine of Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī. He was clearly impressed and influenced by his teaching. Yet he did not identify himself with it. In his theological compendium he rather lent support to a broadly based, catholic Mu'tazilism.²¹

Al-Zamakhsharī studied *ḥadīth* with Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Naṣr b. Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh b. al-Baṭīr al-Baghdādī (d. 494/1101), Abū Maṣṣūr Naṣr al-Ḥārithī, known as the *Shaykh al-Islām*,²² and Abū Sa'd al-Shaqqānī or al-Shiqqānī who was a scholar. Biographical dictionaries do not provide much information about him.²³ Ibn al-Baṭīr was a famous *muhaddith*, and transmitted *aḥādīth* from Abū Muḥammad b. al-Bay', 'Umar b. Aḥmad al-'Ubkarī, Abū al-Ḥusayn b. Bishrān, Abū al-Ḥusayn b. Rizqwiyya, and Abū Bakr al-Munaqqī. Al-Zamakhsharī studied *ḥadīth* with him in Baghdād and transmitted from him.²⁴

²¹ Madelung, *Theology of al-Zamakhsharī*, 492–93.

²² Ibn Khallikān states that al-Zamakhsharī studied literature with al-Ḥārithī, while other sources mention that he studied *ḥadīth* with him. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2688; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 4:254; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:279; Ḥāfiẓ Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Alī al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar (Cairo: Maktaba Wahba, 1994), 2:315; Tāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119.

²³ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2688; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:79; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Tāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119.

²⁴ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, 4:192; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *al-'Ibar fī khabar man 'abar* ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munjid (Kuwait: Maṭba'at Ḥukūmat al-Kuwait, 1960–66), 4:106; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Siyar al-a'lām al-nubalā*, ed. Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūt and Ibrāhīm al-Zaybaq (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1981–96), 19:46–48, 20:152; 'Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Fidā' Ismā'il b. 'Umar Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa-l-nihāya* (Beirut: Maktabat al-Ma'ārīf, 1966), 12:161; al-Fāsi, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn* 7:138; Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, ed. A. Meursinge (Leiden and Tehran: Arabic and Persian Text Series, 1839 and 1960), 41; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadhrāt al-dhahab*, 4:118.

Al-Andarasbānī mentions that al-Zamakhsharī and one of his students Abū al-Mu'ayyad al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Makkī revived the *ḥadīths* in Khwārazm. He states that,

He [al-Zamakhsharī] was the first to revive the science of Tradition (*ʿilm al-ḥadīth*) in Khwārazm and to make it flourish there. He brought the books of the Traditions from Iraq and “urged the people” (*hathth al-nās*) to study it. This science was spread out by him and after him by Akḥṭab al-khuṭabā’ (Abū al-Mu'ayyad al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Makkī).²⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī wrote four works on *ḥadīth*: *al-Fāʿiq fī gharīb al-ḥadīth*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Muwāfaqāt bayna ahl al-bayt wa al-ṣaḥāba*, *Mutashābih asmā’ al-ruwāt* and *Khaṣāʾiṣ al-ʿashara al-kirām al-barara*.

Abū Muḍar Maḥmūd b. Jarīr al-Ḍabbī al-Isfahānī (d. 507/1114) was actively responsible for introducing and spreading of Muʿtazilism throughout Khwārazm.²⁶ He was known as *farīd al-ʿaṣr* (unique in his time) and *waḥīd al-dahr* (incomparable in his era), a great scholar in the fields of lexicography, grammar, and medicine and an exemplary character in his virtues and moral excellence. He lived in Khwārazm for a long time and many people obtained and benefited from his knowledge and high moral standards. Al-Zamakhsharī was among those who not only studied literature, grammar, and lexicography with him, but also followed his school of thought.²⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī wrote fourteen titles on literature.

Al-Zamakhsharī studied grammar with ʿAbd Allāh b. Ṭalḥa al-Yāburī (d. 518/1124) who was born in Yābur and stayed for sometime in Seville (*Ishbiliya*). He was a grammarian, theologian (*uṣūlī*), and jurist (*faqīh*). His important works

²⁵ Abū al-Mu'ayyad al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Makkī was al-Zamakhsharī's favorite student and in the year 550/1155 he wrote a commentary on al-Zamakhsharī's *Unmūdḥaj* entitled *Kifāyat al-naḥw*. See al-Andarasbānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 379; C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur Supplement*, (Leiden: Brill, 1936–1942), 1:285, 513, 549, 623; C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*, (Leiden: Brill, 1937–1942), 1:350.

²⁶ Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 4; Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Ḥūfī, *Al-Zamakhsharī* (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-ʿArabī, 1966), 48; Murtaḍa Āyat Allāh Zāda al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī lughwīyyan wa-mufasssiran* (Cairo: Dār al-Thaqāfa, 1977), 96.

²⁷ Al-Andarasbānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:2687; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:267; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 5:168, 172; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:489; Zayn al-Dīn ʿUmar b. al-Muẓaffar Ibn al-Wardī, *Tārīkh ibn al-Wardī* (Najaf: Maṭbaʿa al-Ḥaydariyya, 1969), 2:63; Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Muḥāsīn Yūsuf Ibn Taghribardī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*. (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub wa al-Wathāʾiq al-Qawmiyya, 2005), 5:274; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya* 2:276; al-Dāwūdī, *Tabaqāt al-mufasssirin* 2:315; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-saʿāda*, 2:100; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadhrāt al-dhahab*, 4:119; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt* 8:119.

are *al-Mudkhal sharḥ Risāla ibn abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī*, *Sayf al-Islām ‘alā madhhab Mālik*, and *al-Radd ‘alā ibn Ḥazm*. Al-Fāsī states that al-Zamakhsharī traveled from Khawārazm to Mecca to study grammar with him. However, according to al-Suyūṭī, while in Mecca, al-Zamakhsharī studied *Kitāb Sibawayhi* with ‘Abd Allāh b. Ṭalḥa al-Yāburī.²⁸ He also studied grammar with Abū Muḍar al-Ḍabbī.

Al-Zamakhsharī studied lexicography with Abū Maṣṣūr Mawḥūb b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. al-Khiḍr al-Jawālīqī (d. 539/1144) and Abū Muḍar al-Ḍabbī. Abū Maṣṣūr b. al-Jawālīqī was a great scholar in a variety of sciences, and an associate of al-Khaṭīb al-Tibrīzī. He taught philology at the Nizāmiyya after al-Tibrīzī. He learned *ḥadīth* from Abū al-Qāsim b. al-Baṣrī and Abū Ṭāhir b. Abū al-Saqr, and al-Kindī and Ibn Jawzī transmitted from him. He was trustworthy, pious, virtuous, and profoundly intelligent. He was prudent in his answers to questions and admired for his beautiful calligraphy. He had enormous knowledge in lexicography and grammar. Al-‘Imād al-Khaṭīb narrated that, “At that time, there were four grammarians in Baghdād: al-Jawālīqī, Ibn al-Shajarī, Ibn al-Khashshāb, and Ibn al-Dahhān.”²⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī studied lexicography with him. Al-Qifṭī (d. 646/1248) mentions that Abū al-Yumn Zayd b. Ḥasan al-Kindī (d. 613/1217), one of Jawālīqī’s students, reported that al-Zamakhsharī “came to us in Baghdād in 533/1138, and I saw him with Jawālīqī twice – first time, studying books on lexicography, and second time, seeking *ijāza* (license) for them, because prior to that, he had neither visited him nor transmitted from him.”³⁰

In the fields of grammar and lexicography he penned eight and five works respectively. However, no one is mentioned specifically as al-Zamakhsharī’s teacher in exegesis.

Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Muzaḥḥar al-Naysābūrī (d. 442/1051) was a man of letters, poet, writer, and teacher of the people of Khawārazm in his time. Yāqūt, al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), al-Dāwūdī (d. 945/1538), Ṭāshkubrīzāda (d. 968/1561) and al-Khavānsārī (d. 1313/1895) mention that al-Zamakhsharī studied literature (*adab*) with him. Yāqūt even states that he was al-Zamakhsharī’s teacher before Abū Muḍar.

It seems that there is confusion in the name of Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Muzaḥḥar al-Naysābūrī and it cannot be established conclusively that he taught al-

²⁸ Al-Fāsī, *al-Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:46; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maqarrī, *Nafḥ al-ṭīb min ghusn al-raṭīb*, ed. Iḥsān ‘Abbās (Beirut: Dār al-Ṣādir, 1968), 2:648–49; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍat al-jannāt*, 8:126; ‘Umar Riḍā Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifīn: Tarājīm musannifīn al-kutub al-‘Arabiyya* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth al-‘Arabī, 1983), 6:65.

²⁹ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:587, 2:29–31, 324, 308.

³⁰ Al-Qifṭī, *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt*, 3:270; al-Dhahābī, *Siyar* 20:153; al-Sam’ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 2:135–36; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:98; H. Fleisch, “al-Djawālīqī,” *EF*, 2:490.

Zamakhsharī. Abū al-Ḥasan died in 442/1051, about a quarter of a century prior to al-Zamakhsharī's birth. So he could not have been his teacher. There is a likelihood that al-Zamakhsharī might have studied with one of the descendants of Abū al-Ḥasan by the same name. The teacher of al-Zamakhsharī might be his son or grandson by the same name.³¹

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Khwārazmī was a student of the Zaydī exegete al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101). Madelung mentions Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Khwārazmī as one of al-Zamakhsharī's teachers, though none of the biographical dictionaries lists his name. According to Madelung, al-Zamakhsharī might have visited Bayhaq, al-Jishumī's hometown after the latter's death. He might have met Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Khawarazmī there and studied with him. It is through him that he could have become familiar with al-Jishumī's Qur'ānic exegesis and the Mu'tazilite doctrine of Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār. Some scholars are of the opinion that al-Zamakhsharī used al-Jishumī's *al-Tahdhīb fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān* when composing his *al-Kashshāf*. However, Madelung does not agree with it.³²

Madelung's information is based upon a narrative mentioned in al-Jishumī's *Sharḥ 'Uyūn al-masā'il fī 'ilm al-uṣūl*. Al-Jishumī had many students but three of them mentioned by name were: Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Khawarazmī, whose name, father's name and grandfather's name were the same; 'Alī b. Zayd b. al-Barūqanī; and al-Jishumī's son Muḥammad who transmitted from his father, heard (*sama'*) from him in 452/1061. It is mentioned that al-Qāḍī al-Ḥāfiẓ was al-Zamakhsharī's teacher. However, it is not clear who al-Qāḍī al-Ḥāfiẓ was. The information provided in the *Sharḥ 'Uyūn* is not corroborated by any other source because none of the biographical dictionaries mentions his name as al-Zamakhsharī's teacher.³³ So far as the name of Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Khwārazmī is concerned, it is confirmed that he was student of al-Jishumī however, it does not prove that he was a teacher of al-Zamakhsharī.

Abū Manṣūr was a theologian and preacher in Khwārazm. Al-Zamakhsharī studied theology with him and he studied Qur'ānic exegesis with al-Zamakhsharī. There is confusion of names between Abū Manṣūr Naṣr al-Hārithī, Abū

31 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 3:1016–18, 6:2688; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:526, 2:279; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119.

32 Madelung, "al-Ḥākim al-Djushamī," *EF² Supplement*, 12:343; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF² Supplement*, 12:840–41.

33 Qāḍī 'Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan 'Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadhānī al-Asadabādī, *Faḍl al-I'tizāl wa-ṭabaqāt al-Mu'tazila*, ed. Fu'ād Sayyid (Tunis: al-Dār al-Tunisiyya li-al-Nashr, 1986), 353–54.

Manṣūr al-Jawālīqī, and Abū Manṣūr. According to Yāqūt, al-Zamakhsharī studied *Hadīth* from Abū Manṣūr Naṣr al-Ḥārithī, while Ibn Khallikān (d. 681/1282) states that he studied literature from him. Tashkubrīzāda mentions the name of Abū Manṣūr al-Jawālīqī al-Ḥārithī.³⁴

Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā b. Ḥamza b. Wahnās (d. 526/1131) was the Zaydī *Imām* of Mecca. According to al-Qifṭī and Ibn Taghribardī, al-Zamakhsharī studied with Ibn Wahnās, but do not mention what he studied with him. Both al-Qifṭī and Ibn Taghribardī, as well al-Fāsī state, that it was Ibn Wahnās who encouraged al-Zamakhsharī to write Mu‘tazilite *tafsīr* of the Qur‘ān, to which he agreed.³⁵

4 Al-Zamakhsharī's Students

According to al-Qifṭī, al-Dhahabī, and al-Dāwūdī, “In any city or town where he entered, people joined him to become his students” (*mā dakhala balad illā wa-ajtamā‘u ‘alayhi wa-talamadhū lahu*).³⁶ Al-Anbārī, Yāqūt, al-Dhahabī and al-Fāsī mention that, “When he passed through ‘Irāq on his way to pilgrimage to Mecca, Abū al-Sa‘ādāt Hibat Allāh b. al-Shajarī was delighted on his arrival and benefited (from his knowledge).”³⁷ Ibn Khallikān, al-Fāsī and Ibn al-‘Imād (d. 1089/1679) describe the meeting between al-Zamakhsharī and the Ḥanafī jurist al-Dāmaghānī in one of his visits to Baghdād.³⁸ This means that he had not only contacts with a good number of scholars but had many students who studied and obtained knowledge from him.

The biographical dictionaries identify a total number of twenty-six names who were al-Zamakhsharī's students. In most of the cases they mention what students studied with or transmitted from al-Zamakhsharī. However in some cases it is mentioned generally and one does not know their field of study.

³⁴ Al-Andarabānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368, 379; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa‘āda*, 2:100.

³⁵ Al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:268; al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn*, 6:218, 220; Ibn Taghribardī, *Nujūm al-zāhira*, 5:274.

³⁶ Al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; al-Dhahabī, *Tā’rīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:155; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315.

³⁷ Abū al-Barakāt ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā’ fī ṭabaqāt al-udabā’*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār Nahḍa Miṣr lil-Ṭaba’ wa al-Nashr, 1967), 392; Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, 6:6288; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar* 20:153; al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138.

³⁸ Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān*, 5:169; al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:140; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 4:119.

Al-Zamakhsharī granted to some students “license” (*ijāza*) to transmit what they had learned and written. He also granted to others “general license” (*ijāza ‘amma*). Many students and contemporary scholars attended his *majālis* and benefitted from each other’s knowledge.

Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Aḥmad b. Hārūn al-‘Imrānī al-Khwārazmī (d. ca. 560/1165) was known as *ḥujjat al-afāḍil* (Proof of the Excellence) and *fakhr al-mashā’ikh* (Pride of the Scholars). He came from Khwārazm, and was a learned scholar in grammar. He was Mu’tazilite and wrote a commentary on the Qur’ān. Al-Khavānsārī specifically mentions that he studied traditions with al-Zamakhsharī. Other sources state that he studied literature with al-Zamakhsharī.³⁹

Muḥammad b. ‘Abī al-Qāsim b. Yabjūk al-Baqqālī (d. 562/1167) was known as *zayn al-mashā’ikh* (Adornment of the Learned), *ḥujja fī lisān al-‘Arab* (Authority on the Arabic Language), and leading authority in literature. His works include *Miftāḥ al-tanzil*, *al-i’jāb fī al-i’rāb*, *Taqwīm al-lisān fī al-naḥw*, *al-Bidāya’ fī al-ma’ānī wa-al-bayān*, *Manāzil al-‘Arab*, and *Sharḥ asmā’ Allāh al-ḥusnā*. He studied lexicography, grammar and traditions with al-Zamakhsharī. He took al-Zamakhsharī’s position after his death.⁴⁰

Abū Bakr al-Azdī Yaḥyā b. Sa’dūn al-Qurṭūbī (d. 567/1171–2) was a scholar in the city of Moṣul and travelled widely in Cordova, Egypt and Baghdād to study. He was a student of al-Zamakhsharī and excelled in Arabic and the variant readings of the Qur’ān.⁴¹

Abū al-Mu’ayyad al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Makkī (d. 568/1172) known as *akḥṭab al-khuṭabā’* (one of the best orators) and *akḥṭab al-Khwārazm* (the best orator of Khwārazm) was a famous and great scholar in the fields of jurisprudence, literature, traditions, oratory, and poetry. Al-Andarasbānī states that he studied grammar and literature with al-Zamakhsharī, while al-Khavānsārī and al-Suyūṭī mention that he studied jurisprudence, literature, traditions, preaching, and poetry with him.⁴²

39 Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:195; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:123.

40 Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-udabā’*, 6:2618; Muḥyi al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Qādir b. Muḥammad Ibn Abī al-Wafā, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍīyya fī ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanafīyya*, ed. ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥilw. (Jiza: Hajr li al-Ṭabā’a wa al-Nashr wa-al-Tawzī’ wa-al-Ṭlān, 1993), 4:392–3; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughyā*, 1:215; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:124.

41 ‘Afīf al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. As’ad al-Yamanī al-Yāfī, *Mir’āt al-janān wa-‘ibrat al-yaqẓān fī ma’rifat mā yu’tabar min ḥawādith al-zamān*. (Hyderabad Deccan: Dā’irat al-Ma’ārif al-Nizāmiyya, 1919–21), 3:383.

42 Al-Andarasbānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 370–1; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:308; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:123–24.

Abū 'Amr 'Āmir b. al-Ḥasan al-Simsār was al-Zamakhsharī's nephew. Al-Sam'ānī mentions that he transmitted (*rawā*) from al-Zamakhsharī in his home village of Zamakhshar. However, he does not state specifically what he transmitted.⁴³

Abū al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Silafī (d. 576/1180) moved to Baghdād in 511/1117 and stayed there except for when he traveled to Cairo for a period of two years. In 546/1151 the Fātimid vizier al-Zafīr al-Malik al-Adī 'Abd Allāh b. Ishāq b. al-Sallār had a *madrasā* established for him, where he taught until his death. According to Ibn Khallikān, al-Silafī wrote to al-Zamakhsharī from Alexandria on two occasions, requesting him the license (*ijāza*) to transmit "what he had heard and what he had written," which he granted to him. Some of the sources have preserved part of this correspondence; however, al-Maqqarī provides full account of the correspondence between al-Silafī and al-Zamakhsharī in his *Azhār al-riyād fī akhbār 'Īyād*.⁴⁴

Ibn al-Anbārī, author of the *Nuzhat al-alibbā' fī tabaqāt al-udabā'* was one of al-Zamakhsharī's students. However, al-Suyutī does not mention al-Zamakhsharī as Ibn al-Anbārī's teacher.⁴⁵

Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Jalīl al-'Umarī Rashīd al-Dīn al-Waṭwaṭ (d. 578/1182) was a famous descendent of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. He participated in al-Zamakhsharī's *majlis*, which is corroborated by his two letters he wrote. He was one of the outstanding students of al-Zamakhsharī.⁴⁶

Abū Ṭāhir Barakāt b. Ibrāhīm al-Khushū'ī (d. 598/1201) came from a family of scholars who taught *ḥadīth* at the Bayt al-Ḥadīth. Ibn Khallikān mentions that he had outstanding certificates of audition (*sam'at*) and was unique and pos-

⁴³ Al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2688; al-Andarāsbanī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 381.

⁴⁴ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2690; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:170; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:154; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-ḥuffāz* (Hyderabad Deccan: Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1958), 4:1298–1304; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:139; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Suyūṭī, *Tabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41; al-Dāwūdī, *Tabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:297; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maqqarī, *Azhār al-riyād fī akhbār 'Īyād*. ed. Muṣṭafā b. Muḥammad al-Saqqā, Ibrāhīm al-Abyārī, 'Abd al-Ḥafīz Shalbī (Cairo: Maṭba' Lajna al-Tā'līf wa al-Tarjama wa al-Nashr, 1942), 3:282–88; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadhrāt al-dhahab*, 4:120; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119.

⁴⁵ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:86–88; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:123.

⁴⁶ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2631–36; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:226; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allīfīn*, 11:229.

sessed some of the licenses of transmission he held. Al-Zamakhsharī granted him the license (*ijāza*).⁴⁷

Abū al-Faṭḥ Nāṣir b. 'Abd al-Sayyid Ibn Muṭarriz (d. 610/1213) known as al-Muṭarrizī was a poet. He was a Ḥanafite Mu'tazilite and according to al-Dhahabī, he was one of the leading Mu'tazilites. He studied with al-Zamakhsharī but sources do not mention the field of study. Al-Khavānsārī states that due to Muṭarriz's close friendship with al-Zamakhsharī, he received the title of "Successor of al-Zamakhsharī" (*khilāfat al-Zamakhsharī*). However, Muṭarriz was born in 538/1144, the year of al-Zamakhsharī's death. Under these circumstances, it is not possible that either he studied with al-Zamakhsharī or received the title of *khilāfa*.⁴⁸

Umm al-Mu'ayyad Zaynab bint 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sha'riyya (d. 615/1218) was an outstanding scholar and visited a number of eminent scholars and received the knowledge and license (*ijāza*) to transmit it to others. Ibn Khallikan specifically mentions that al-Zamakhsharī granted her a general license (*ijāza 'amma*) to transmit all of his works.⁴⁹

Al-Fāsī mentions that Abū al-Ma'ālī Yaḥyā b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī al-Shaybānī was a judge (*qāḍī*) in Mecca who transmitted the *Kashshāf* to his nephew Abū al-Ma'ālī Mājid b. Sulaymān al-Fihri. He heard it from al-Zamakhsharī in Mecca. Subsequently, Mājid b. Sulaymān al-Fihri transmitted (*rawā 'an*) the *Kashshāf*.⁵⁰

Sadīd b. Muḥammad al-Khayyāṭī, known as *Shaykh al-Islām* was a great scholar in jurisprudence and theology. He transmitted from (*rawā 'an*) 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-'Imrānī, *fakhr al-mashā'ikh* (Pride of the Learned) who was one of al-Zamakhsharī's students. Al-Laknawī mentions that al-Khayyāṭī was an expert in jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and theology (*kalām*) and he studied under al-'Imrānī al-Khwārazmī who was one of al-Zamakhsharī's students. However, the source does not mention the field of study.⁵¹

Ya'qūb b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ja'far Abū Yusūf al-Balkhī al-Jandalī is mentioned by al-Suyūṭī and Yāqūt in their biographical dictionaries. Al-Suyūṭī says that al-Balkhī was one of the leading scholars in literature (*aḥad min al-*

47 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 1:269–70; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:139.

48 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 22:28; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:124; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:195.

49 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 2:344, 5:171; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:154, 22:85; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:139; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt*, 41; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315.

50 Al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:112–13.

51 Taqī al-Dīn b. 'Abd al-Qādir al-Tamīmī, *Ṭabaqāt al-saniyya fī tarāim al-Ḥanafīyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥilw. (Cairo: Lajnat Iḥyā' Turāth al-Islāmī, 1970), 4:7; al-Laknawī, *Fawā'id al-bahiyya*, 66.

a'imma fī al-adab) and studied with al-Zamakhsharī. Yāqūt reports that he was an expert in grammar and disciple of al-Zamakhsharī but does not mention what he studied with al-Zamakhsharī.⁵²

Al-Sam'ānī mentions in his *Kitāb al-Ansāb* that Abū al-Maḥāsīn 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. 'Abd Allāh al-Bazzāz transmitted from al-Zamakhsharī in Abiward.⁵³ He also states that Abū Ṭāhir Sāmān b. 'Abd al-Malik was a jurist (*faqīh*) and transmitted from al-Zamakhsharī in Khawārazm. However, the report does not mention what was transmitted.⁵⁴ According to al-Sam'ānī, Abū Sa'd Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd al-Shāshī transmitted from al-Zamakhsharī in Samarqand. However, it is not known what was transmitted from him.⁵⁵

Abū al-Maḥāsīn Ismā'il b. 'Abd Allāh al-Ṭawīl "transmitted from" (*rawā 'anhu*) al-Zamakhsharī in Ṭabristān and to al-Sam'ānī himself.⁵⁶ Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd was a *qāḍī* in Samarqand who transmitted poetry from al-Zamakhsharī. According to Ibn Khallikān, he also transmitted poetry from al-Zamakhsharī to al-Sam'ānī or his son, Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Dhahabī in Samarqand.⁵⁷

Al-Khavānsārī mentions that Ibn Shahrāshūb transmitted from al-Zamakhsharī, but does not state what specifically he transmitted.⁵⁸ According to al-Dhahabī, Ismā'il b. 'Abd Allāh al-Khawārmī transmitted poetry (*rawa 'anhu anāshīd*) from al-Zamakhsharī.⁵⁹

Al-Andarasbānī states that 'Atīq b. 'Abd al-'Azīz al-Naysābūrī was one of al-Zamakhsharī's students. He participated in al-Zamakhsharī's *majlis* and studied the *Asās al-balāgha* with him.⁶⁰

According to al-Andarasbānī, Abū al-Faraj al-Makkī, known as "Light of the Scholars" (*shams al-a'imma*) and "Leader of the Scholars" (*ra'īs al-a'imma*) was a student of al-Zamakhsharī. He studied exegesis with al-Zamakhsharī.⁶¹

52 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2844; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:351.

53 Al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:181–82.

54 Al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:181–82.

55 Al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:181–82; Ibn al-Athīr, *Lubāb*, 2:74; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:154; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138.

56 Al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:181–82; Ibn al-Athīr, *Lubāb*, 2:74; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn* 7:138.

57 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:171–72; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:155.

58 Al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:123.

59 Al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:154.

60 Al-Andarasbānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 377.

61 Al-Andarasbānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 379.

5 Al-Zamakhsharī's Scholarly Contribution

Al-Zamakhsharī's scholarly contribution covers a wide variety of fields: exegesis, traditions, jurisprudence, literature, grammar, and lexicography. All the biographical dictionaries mention his important books, which he wrote during his lifetime. There is a substantial difference regarding the number of the books reported by the primary as well as secondary sources. However, most of the sources agree that al-Zamakhsharī produced some fifty books, out of which about twenty titles are available in print form and probably the same number of manuscripts is preserved in various libraries of the world. It appears that the remaining works are not extant.

According to the primary sources, Yāqūt gives a list of forty-nine titles produced by al-Zamakhsharī, and Ibn Khallikān gives the number of thirty-one works. Al-Fāsī and Ibn al-'Imād both provide in their biographical notes twenty-nine titles. Al-Dāwūdī in his *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, gives thirty-three works. Ibn Quṭlūbughā and Ṭāshkubrizāda mention twenty-seven and twenty-six titles respectively. Al-Suyūṭī gives nine titles in *Ṭabaqāt*, and sixteen titles in *Bughya*. Yāf'ī provides thirty titles of al-Zamakhsharī, while al-Dhahabī mentions only eleven works.

According to the secondary sources, Rahman provides seventy-three titles of the books authored by al-Zamakhsharī, out of which seventeen are available in print form; eighteen are in manuscript form, which are preserved in various libraries of the world, while the remaining thirty-eight are lost. Sarkis and Kaḥḥāla mention twelve and six titles of the books respectively. Ziriklī gives the number of books twenty-one. Agius' bibliography provides a list of fifty-six books and gives brief descriptions of twenty-seven books, while for the remaining twenty-nine books he only mentions their sources of information. Brockelmann mentions twenty titles of al-Zamakhsharī. He provides the names of publishers, and their dates and places of publication, as well the listing of manuscripts. Wherever possible, he gives a summary of the titles. Madelung gives fifteen titles of the books. He provides brief descriptions of *al-Kashshāf*, *al-Minhāj fī usul al-dīn*, *Rabī' al-abrār wa-nusus al-akhbār*, *Maqāmāt*, also known as *al-Naṣā'ih al-kibar*, and *Aṭwāq al-dhahab* or *al-Naṣā'ih al-sighar*. Lane provides a list of forty-eight books with short descriptions under five categories: grammar, lexicography, belles-lettres (*adab*), religious sciences and unknown.⁶²

⁶² Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168–69; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:139–40; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:119; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315–6;

6 Al-Zamakhsharī's Travels and Visits to Mecca

As mentioned above, al-Zamakhsharī went for the first time to Jurjāniyya for more education. However, Ibn Khallikān mentions that he travelled to Bukhārā when he reached the age to acquire further knowledge and continue his studies outside of his hometown.

According to al-Fāsī, al-Zamakhsharī visited Baghdād sometime before 500/1106 where he met many scholars and heard *ḥadīths* from Abū al-Khaṭṭāb Naṣr b. al-Baṭīr and others. Afterwards, he left for Mecca “and stayed there in the neighborhood of Mecca for a while helping (teaching) and benefitting, that is, acquiring knowledge” (*fa aqāma hunāka muddatan mujāwarān bi-makkati yufīdu wa yastafīdu*). He studied with ‘Abd Allāh b. Ṭalḥa al-Yāburī al-Andalusī, *Kitāb al-Sībawayh*, and this was his main reason. Then he returned to Khwārazm and stayed there for sometime.⁶³

He visited Baghdād again while he was going to Mecca for pilgrimage, where he met with Ibn al-Shajarī, and al-Jawālīqī.⁶⁴ According to al-Suyūṭī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda, al-Zamakhsharī visited Baghdād more than once.⁶⁵ Madelung states that al-Zamakhsharī performed pilgrimage for seven times, so it is possible that he may have visited ‘Irāq in any of these occasions.⁶⁶

Al-Zamakhsharī visited and stayed in Mecca at least twice for a period of approximately twelve years. Al-Andarasbānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda mention that al-

Zayn al-Dīn Qāsim al-Ḥanafī Ibn al-Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājīm fī ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanafīyya*, ed. Gustav Flügel (Nendeln, Liechtenstein: Kraus Reprint, 1966), 53; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:98–99; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Yāfī, *Mir’āt al-janān*, 3:269; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:487–89; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 157–77; Yūsuf Ilyān Sarkis, *Mu’jam al-maṭbū’āt al-‘Arabiyya wa-al-mu’arraba* (Cairo: Maṭba’at Sarkis, 1928–31), 1:973–6; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifīn*, 12:186; Khayr al-Dīn Ziriklī, *al-A’lām. Qāmūs tarājīm li-ashhar al-rijāl wa-al-nisā’ min al-‘arab wa-l-musta’ribīn wa-l-mustashriqīn*. (Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Malāyyīn, 2007), 7:178; Mawlvī Faqīr Muhammad Jehlami, *Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, ed. Khurshid Ahmad Khan. (Lahore: Maktaba Hasan Suhayl, n.d.), 246; D. A. Agius, “Some Bio-Bibliographical Notes on Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī,” *al-‘Arabiyya* 15 (1982), 108–30; C. Brockelmann, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *El*¹, 8:1205–7; Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *El*² Supplement, 12:840–41; Lane, *Traditional Mu’tazilite Qur’ān Commentary*, 267–98. A list of al-Zamakhsharī’s works is provided in the Appendix.

⁶³ Al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138. According to some other sources, his first visit to Mecca might have taken place between 500/1106 and 518/1124. See al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, 2: 315; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:98; and al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280.

⁶⁴ Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā’*, 290–91; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:153; al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138.

⁶⁵ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:351; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:98.

⁶⁶ Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *El*² Supplement, 12:840–41.

Zamakhsharī stayed for five years in “the sacred city” (*al-balad al-ḥaram*).⁶⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī mentions about his stay in Mecca in the following verses:

*fa-jāwartu rabbī wa-huwa khayru mujāwar
ladā baytihi al-bayti al-muḥarram ‘ākifā
aqamtu bi-idhni Allāh khamsan kawāmilan
wa-ṣādaftu sab’an bi-al-mu’arrāf wāqifā
ḡalaltu ma’ al-‘ummār mu’tamirā lahu
wa-bittu ma’ al-ṭuwwāfi bi-al-bayti ṭā’ifa
wa-tamma lī al-Kashshāf thamma bi-baldatin
bihā habaṭa al-tanzīl li-al-ḥaqqi kāshifā*⁶⁸

I was my Lord's neighbor and He is an excellent neighbor
by His House, the Sacred Sanctuary, assiduously
I stayed, with God's permission, for full five years
and standing with determination [on the plains of ‘Arafāt] for seven times
I remained with those who made small pilgrimage⁶⁹
and spent nights with the pilgrims circumambulating the *Ka’ba*
And I completed the *Kashshāf*, there in the city
where the revelation was sent down, unveiling the truth

The first of these visits would have taken place sometime between 500/1106 and 518/1124 when al-Zamakhsharī visited Baghdād where he met many scholars and heard *ḥadīths* from al-Baṭīr, Abū Sa’d al-Shaqqānī, and Abū Manṣūr al-Ḥārithī.⁷⁰ Afterwards, he left for Mecca and stayed there in the neighborhood of Mecca.⁷¹ Most of the biographers mention in their notes that he spent some time (*zamān-an*) or years (*sinīn*) there.⁷² However, Abū al-Fidā’ writes that al-Zamakhsharī went to Mecca for pilgrimage and stayed there many years.⁷³ Other biographers

⁶⁷ Al-Andarasbānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:100.

⁶⁸ Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, ed. ‘Abd al-Sattār Ḍayf (Cairo: Mu’assasat al-Mukhtār lil-Nashr wa al-Tawzī’, 2004), 216.

⁶⁹ ‘Umra is a small pilgrimage which can be performed anytime during the year. See R. Paret [E. Chaumont], “‘Umra,” *EF*², 10: 864.

⁷⁰ Al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Mufasssīrīn*, 2: 315; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:98; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280.

⁷¹ Madelung and others are of the opinion that he moved to Mecca in the year 512/1118 after recovering from his “serious illness” (*nākiha*) and “warning” (*mundhira*). See Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *EF*² Supplement, 12:840 – 41.

⁷² Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab* 4: 119; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān*, 5:169; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41.

⁷³ ‘Imād al-Dīn Ismā’il b. ‘Alī Abū al-Fidā’, *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, ed. Muḥammad Zaynham Muḥammad ‘Azb (Cairo: Dār al-Ma’ārif, 1998), 3:25.

mention that when he arrived at Mecca, al-Zamakhsharī visited his teacher 'Abd Allāh b. Ṭalḥa al-Yāburī and studied with him *Kitāb al-Sibawayh* and stayed there for five years.⁷⁴

The five year stay in Mecca is confirmed by al-Qiftī who states that the greater part of al-Zamakhsharī's life was spent in his town and not at Mecca. After his return from Mecca to Khwārazm, someone asked him, "You have spent the greater part of your life there; what was the motive for your coming back to Khwarazm?" He replied, "I find in my heart here that I do not find there" (*al-qalbu al-ladhī lā ajiduhu thamma ajiduhu hā hunā*).⁷⁵ The information provided by al-Qiftī that he stayed in Mecca for five years and al-Zamakhsharī's verse: "I stayed, with God's permission, for full five years and standing with determination [on the plains of 'Arafāt] for seven times" (*aqamtu bi-idhni Allāh khamsan kawāmilan wa-ṣādaftu sab'an bi-al-mu'arraf wāqifa*) proves that during his first visit al-Zamakhsharī stayed in Mecca for five years.

For the second time, al-Zamakhsharī arrived in Mecca in 526/1131 and stayed there for seven years. On his way to Mecca, he passed through Syria for a short time and praised Tāj al-Mulk Tughtakīn (d. 526/1131), the ruler of Damascus. After his death, his son Shams al-Mulk became the ruler and al-Zamakhsharī praised him too. According to al-Qiftī, Ṭāshkubrīzāda and al-Dhahabī, on his return from Mecca to Khwārazm, he visited Baghdād in 533/1138 and studied with al-Jawālīqī. All these events strongly prove that during his second visit, al-Zamakhsharī lived in Mecca for seven years from 526/1131 to 533/1138.⁷⁶ During this period, he wrote *al-Kashshāf*, which took him two years (from 526/1131 to 528/1133) to complete. He mentions in the introduction of *al-Kashshāf* that he completed the commentary of *al-Kashshāf* in two years, the duration of the caliphate of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, even though it was the work of thirty years.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Al-Andarāsbanī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; al-Fāsi, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:100.

⁷⁵ Al-Qiftī, *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt*, 3:266.

⁷⁶ Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 132–6; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 12; al-Qiftī, *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt*, 3:270; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:153.

⁷⁷ Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl wa 'uyūn al-aqāwīl*, ed. 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd and 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwiḍ. (Riayāḍ: Maktabat al-Abaykān, 1998), 1:98.

7 Al-Zamakhsharī's Intellectual Crisis

Abū Muḍar Maḥmūd b. Jarīr al-Ḍabbī al-Iṣfahānī, one of al-Zamakhsharī's teachers had access to the court of Nizām al-Mulk, a generous patron of scholars of religion and litterateurs.⁷⁸ It was through him that al-Zamakhsharī was introduced to Nizām al-Mulk. Al-Zamakhsharī citing his close relationship with Abū Muḍar, wrote many laudatory panegyrics for Nizām al-Mulk,⁷⁹ but unfortunately could not receive any reward or official position. He complained in his poetry that despite his high caliber scholarly works and extensive erudition he was ignored, while those people who were no match to him were rewarded and got high offices.⁸⁰

In desperation, al-Zamakhsharī left for Khurāsān and visited the vizier Mujir al-Dawla Abū al-Faṭḥ 'Alī b. Ḥusayn al-Adristānī and presented his works on grammar and lexicography as well as penned down a *qaṣīda* in his praise. The vizier appreciated his works and rewarded him with one thousand *dīnārs* and a horse.⁸¹

In Khurāsān, al-Zamakhsharī also met Mu'ayyad al-Malik 'Ubayd Allāh, son of Nizām al-Mulk, who was a high executive of the "office of seals and correspondence" (*dīwān al-ṭughrā' wa al-inshā'*), and well-versed in both Arabic and Persian poetry and prose. He wrote a *qaṣīda* in his praise, however, his luck did not favor him there as well.⁸² Afterwards, al-Zamakhsharī arrived in Iṣfahān, in the court of Saljūqī Sulṭān Muḥammad b. Malik Shāh (d. 511/1117). He wrote panegyrics extolling the Sulṭān's services in promoting the cause of Islam and suppressing the *Bāṭiniyya* sect's activities.⁸³

Sulṭān Malik Shāh appointed Anūshtigīn as governor of Khwārazm. After Anūshtigīn's death, his son Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad Khwārazmshāh became the governor. He was respectful to the people of knowledge and religion. Al-Zamakhsharī praised him for these qualities in him. After him, his son 'Alā al-Dīn Atsīz (d. 551/1156) replaced him. Al-Zamakhsharī presented Atsīz his book *Mu-*

78 'Imād al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ḥāmid al-Iṣfahānī, *Tā'rikh dawlat Āl-Saljūq*, abridged. Al-Faṭḥ b. 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Bundārī al-Iṣfahānī (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīda, 1980), 32, 78–79; H. Bowen [C.E. Bosworth], "Nizām al-Mulk, Abū 'Alī al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Iṣḥāq al-Ṭūsī," *ET*, 8:69.

79 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, 73 (verses 33 to 47); 76–77 (verses 24–36); 79–80 (verses 13 to 31).

80 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, 212–13 (verses 39 to 55).

81 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, 85–88 (verses 1 to 48); 98–99 (verses 1 to 29); al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:267.

82 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, 153 (verses 1 to 9).

83 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, 280–82 (verses 1 to 28).

qaddima al-Adab which was kept in his collection of books. In the introduction of this book, al-Zamakhsharī praises Atsīz's generosity and his appreciation of *belles-lettres*.⁸⁴

However, the biographical sources, except al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda,⁸⁵ indicate that al-Zamakhsharī could not develop intimate relations with high officials in any of the courts he visited. He was very eager for getting a position in the government but could not succeed in it as he often complained about it in his poetry.⁸⁶

The year 512/1118 is the most important in the life of al-Zamakhsharī. He had completed forty-five years of his life,⁸⁷ and in Rajab 512/October 1118, al-Zamakhsharī suffered a serious illness (*nāhika*) and warning (*mundhira*). Al-Zamakhsharī mentions in his book entitled *Maqāmāt* that "he saw in his early morning slumber as if someone called him loudly saying, O Abū al-Qāsim! Destined time and false expectations!" (*annahu uriya fī ba'd ighfā'āt al-fajr ka annamā ṣawwata bihi man yaqūlu lahu yā abū al-Qāsim ajal maktūb wa-'amal makdhūb*).⁸⁸ Upon hearing these words, al-Zamakhsharī was so terrified and perplexed that he penned down some aphorisms. He further states that "this incident happened in the year 512/1118 when he was afflicted with a serious illness, which he called as the warning" (*al-wāqī'a fī sannatin ithnatayī 'asharat ba'd al-khamsa mi'at bi al-marḍati al-nāhika allatī sammāha al-mundhira*).⁸⁹ He made a covenant with God (*mī-thāq li Allāh*) that if he were cured from the illness he would neither go to the thresholds of the rulers nor offer his services to them. He further promised to himself that he would keep his soul and tongue above in composing poetry

84 Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *Muqaddimāt al-adab* (Tehran: Mu'assassa-i Muṭāla'āt-i Islāmī, 2007), 1–3.

85 According to al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda, al-Zamakhsharī used to be guest at the table of ministers and kings, praising them in poetry and leading a life of luxury in this world until God showed him His vision, which became the cause of his breaking up with them and turning to the matter of religion. See Al-Andarabānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:100.

86 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, 73 (verses 33 to 47); 79–80 (verses 13 to 31); 98–99 ((verses 1 to 29)).

87 Al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda mention in their biographical notes that al-Zamakhsharī was forty-one years old. The illness (*nāhika*) and warning (*mundhira*) took place in Rajab 512/October 1118, and al-Zamakhsharī was born on Rajab 27, 467/March 18, 1075. The age of forty-one reported by both al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda seems to be incorrect because he was actually forty-five years old. See al-Andarabānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:100.

88 Al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda mention book's name as *Naṣā'ih al-kibār* which is also known as *Maqāmāt*. It has fifty *maqāmāt* (articles) and it is mentioned in the first *Maqāmat al-rīḍwān*. See al-Zamakhsharī, *Maqāmāt*, 5.

89 Al-Zamakhsharī, *Maqāmāt*, 5–6.

for their praise, refrain from earning his living with their gifts and presents, “and make utmost efforts to take his name out of the official register and remove it” (*wa yajidda fī isqāṭi ʾismihi min al-dīwān wa maḥwih*).⁹⁰ He also promised that he would lead the life of guidance (*al-hudā*), desist from the desires (*al-hawā*) and devote his lifetime in pursuit of the “sciences of various readings of the Qurʾān, the tradition and jurisprudence” (*ʿulūm al-qirāʾāt wa al-ḥadīth wa abwāb al-sharʿ*).⁹¹

Brocklemann and Pellat consider al-Zamakhsharī's *Maqāmāt* as an indication of his repentance in which he addresses to himself a number of moral exhortations. However, it is not an evidence of his conversion from the previous worldly life rather it is a testimony of his decision to renounce writing profane literature. They further state that he was conscious of being a philologist and wrote a commentary (*sharḥ*) on his *Maqāmāt*.⁹²

According to Régis Blachère and Pierre Masnou, following the covenant which al-Zamakhsharī made during his serious illness, he could have turned away from profane literature and dedicated himself to writing that would edify his readers. His *Maqāmāt*, which he addressed to himself in order to stay on the straight path, would have been his eternal reward through repentance and good works. They further state that the contents of some of the *maqāmāt* show clearly that after his conversion, al-Zamakhsharī still had not changed completely and his desires remained dominated by the preoccupations of the secular world.⁹³

Al-Juwaynī's observation is that al-Zamakhsharī's works written after 513/1119 indicate that there is definitely a change in his style of writing. He specifically mentions his works entitled: *al-Mufaṣṣal fī ṣanʿat al-ʾirāb*, *al-Fāʾiq fī gharīb al-ḥadīth*, *Maqāmāt*, *Aṭwāq al-dhahab*, *al-Nṣāʾih al-ṣighār*, *Nawābiḥ al-kalim*, and *Rabīʿ al-abrār*.⁹⁴

Almost all the biographical sources except that of al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda are silent about the intellectual crisis of al-Zamakhsharī. The only main source of his crisis is mentioned by al-Zamakhsharī himself in his own writings. Other than al-Zamakhsharī, both al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda provide the same information about it. Despite the fact that this crisis occur-

⁹⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *Maqāmāt*, 6.

⁹¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *Maqāmāt*, 6–7.

⁹² C. Brocklemann, and Ch. Pellat, “Maḳāma,” *EF*², 6:107.

⁹³ Régis Blachère and Pierre Masnou, *Maqāmāt (Séances) choisies et traduites de l'arabe avec une étude sur le genre* (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1957), 40–41.

⁹⁴ Muṣṭafā al-Ṣāwī al-Juwaynī, *Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī fī tafsīr al-Qurʾān wa-bayān iʾjāzihi* (Miṣr: Dār al-Maʾārif, 1968), 53–62.

red when al-Zamakhsharī was forty-five years old, al-Andarabānī and Ṭashkubrīzāda give his age forty-one at the time.

There are no other reports about the crisis from al-Zamakhsharī's contemporaries or even later historians. The only reliable source of al-Zamakhsharī's crisis is his writings which we should accept and believe in them. After reading his *maqāmāt* and poetry, there is no reason to doubt about the veracity of his crisis. Al-Zamakhsharī might not be leading a life luxury in the company of high ranking government officials and might not have been their guest, but he was desirous to get a job in accordance with his knowledge and wanted to be appreciated and recognized for his works which were extraordinary compared with his contemporaries.

8 Al-Zamakhsharī as a Mu'tazilite Scholar

Al-Zamakhsharī was a pious person and well known for his asceticism and irreplaceable private and public life. He was considered by his contemporary and subsequent scholars as one of the outstanding intellectuals and men of learning of his age. He was famous as 'pride of Khwarazm,' a great scholar of the world in many sciences. His works including *al-Kashshāf* are proof of his well established knowledge and manifestation of his excellence. Ibn Quṭlūbugha states that al-Zamakhsharī wrote unprecedented and unparalleled books, amongst them is *al-Kashshāf*, a commentary of the Qur'ān which none composed similar to it, prior to him.

Al-Andarabānī mentions that al-Zamakhsharī reached such a level of knowledge in lexicography, grammar, rhetoric, eloquence, and poetry that he did not consider anyone equivalent to him. Al-Zamakhsharī claimed that there was no issue in the *Kitāb Sibawayh*, which had not been resolved by him. However, some scholars did not agree with him.

Al-Zamakhsharī was known for his Mu'tazilite theological position, which he professed publicly and proudly. He traveled to Khurāsān and Iraq, and in any city where he went, many people gathered around him and acquired knowledge and benefited from him. He was an erudite scholar of literature, and had close affinity with the Arabs.⁹⁵

⁹⁵ Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā'*, 391–92; al-Yāf'ī, *Mir'āt al-janān*, 3:269; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:279; al-Andarabānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:181–82; Ibn al-Athīr, *Lubāb*, 2:74; Ibn Abī al-Wafā', *al-Jawāhir al-muḍī'yya*, 3:447; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Imbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:265–66; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:279; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41; al-Fāsi, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj*

9 Conclusion

Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī was born in 467/1075 at Zamakhshar in Khwārazm, and died in 538/1144 in Jurjāniyya, where he was buried. Al-Zamakhsharī travelled for purposes of education, visited Mecca twice and stayed there for a period of approximately twelve years. His first visit took place sometime between 500/1106 and 518/1124. His second visit to Mecca was in 526/1131 and he stayed there for seven years, hence he was called with honorific title of *Jār Allāh* (Neighbor of God). During this period, he wrote *al-Kashshāf*, which is considered a model of the Mu'tazilite exegesis of the Qur'ān. No other book in the history of *tafsīr* has been commented upon in the forms of *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars* more than *al-Kashshāf*. Ḥājji Khalīfa in his *Kashf al-zūnūn* lists approximately fifty commentaries on *al-Kashshāf*.

The biographical dictionaries and *ṭabaqāt* works mention that al-Zamakhsharī acquired his education from approximately eleven scholars. However, most of the information available about these scholars is scanty. These sources also identify about twenty-six of his students. In most of the cases they mention what students studied with or transmitted from al-Zamakhsharī, but in some cases information regarding their fields of study is not available.

In the year 512/1118, al-Zamakhsharī experienced intellectual crisis. He mentions in his book *Maqāmāt*, that he suffered a serious illness (*nāhika*) and warning (*mundhira*).

Though there is no mention of al-Zamakhsharī's intellectual crisis by his biographers except al-Andarabānī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda, there is no reason to doubt about the veracity of his crisis.

Although of Persian origin, al-Zamakhsharī's command over Arabic was superb, and unparalleled. He was an outstanding scholar of his time who excelled in many sciences. He was bestowed with the title of *Fakhr Khawārazm* (Glory of Khawārazm) by his contemporaries. Al-Zamakhsharī's scholarly contribution covers a wide variety of fields: exegesis, traditions, jurisprudence, literature, grammar, and lexicography. The biographical dictionaries mention that al-Zamakhsharī composed approximately fifty works during his lifetime.

al-tarājim, 53; Ibn Taghrībardi, *Nujūm al-zāhira*, 5:274; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tā'rikh*, 2:63; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:97.

Chapter 2 *Al-Kashshāf*

1 Introduction of *al-Kashshāf*

Al-Kashshāf ‘*an ḥaqā’iq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl wa ‘uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta’wīl* is the *magnum opus* of al-Zamakhsharī in which he explains the grammatical, lexicographical, and rhetorical features, variant readings and the miraculous nature (*i’jāz*) of the Qur’ān.¹ In the preface to *al-Kashshāf*, al-Zamakhsharī describes the reasons for writing his exegesis of the Qur’ān. He states that, “The learned Mu’tazilite companions used to come to ask me the interpretation of a Qur’ānic verse that I would explain to them clearly and distinctively and it was acclaimed and approved by them. They expressed their desire through some eminent scholars that I should write a commentary on the entire Qur’ān, but I declined it due to my inability to embark upon such a big task.” However, they insisted upon it, and considered that it was his “individual obligation” (*farḍ ‘ayn*),² because of the deplorable conditions, inadequacy (of knowledge) of the masses, and lack of de-

1 Al-Andarashbānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368; al-Sam’anī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:181–82; Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā’*, 391; Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-udabā’*, 6:2691; Ibn al-Athīr, *Lubāb*, 2:74; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān*, 5:168; Ismā’il b. ‘Alī Abū al-Fidā’, *Kitāb al-Mukhtṣar fī akhbār al-bashar*, ed. Muḥammad Zaynham Muḥammad ‘Azb (Cairo: Dār al-Ma’ārif, 1998), 3:25; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:487; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:152; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tārīkh*, 2:63; al-Yāf’ī, *Mir’āt al-janān*, 3:269; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 12:219; Ibn Abī al-Wafā’, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍī’yya*, 3:448; al-Fāsi, *al-Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:139; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Alī Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, ed. Ghanīm b. ‘Abbās b. Ghanīm (Cairo: Al-Fārūq al-Ḥadītha lil-Ṭaba’a wa al-Nashr, 1996), 7:63–64; Ibn Taghrībardi, *Nujūm al-zāhira*, 5:274; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājīm*, 53; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:98; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 4:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawā’id al-bahīyya*, 167; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu’jam al-maṭbū’āt*, 1:974; Ziriklī, *al-A’lām*, 7:178; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifīn*, 12:186; D.A. Agius, “Some Bio-Bibliographical Notes on Abū al-Qāsim Mahmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī,” *al-Arabiyya* 15 (1982), 113; al-Juwaynī, *Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī*, 76; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; ‘Abd al-Sattār Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar al-Zamakhsharī: ḥayātuhu wa-shī’ruhu* (Cairo: ‘Ālam al-Kutub, 1994), 80; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 123; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 17; Raḥmān, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 158; Brockelmann, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *ET*¹, 8:1205–7; Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *ET*² *Supplement*, 12:840–41.

2 *Farḍ ‘ayn* is an injunction or ordinance the obligation of which extends to every Muslim, such as five daily prayers and fasting during the month of Ramaḍān, etc. *Fard kifāya* is a collective duty in which the performance of an obligation by a sufficient number of Muslims excuses the other individuals from fulfilling it, such as performance of *ṣalāt* in congregation in the mosque, holy war, etc. See Th. W. Juynboll, “Farḍ,” *ET*¹, 3:61.

termination in those days. Al-Zamakhsharī further states that he elaborated and commented on the opening letters (*fawātiḥ*)³ of the Qur’ānic chapters and the real meanings of the second chapter entitled “The Cow” (*al-Baqarah*) in the expectation of inculcating in his readers an appreciation of the science of exegesis. When he made the decision for return to Mecca and embarked upon his journey, he encountered people, though a few of them, enthusiastically desired to learn and benefit from his knowledge. When he reached Mecca, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. ‘Īsā b. Ḥamza b. Wahhās (d. 526/1131), the Zaydī *Imām* of Mecca, insisted and urged him that he should compose his commentary. He also told him that he was planning to visit him in Khwārazm and preparing for journey to convince him to write it. Al-Zamakhsharī states that upon such insistence and desire of the people, he was left with no other choice except to comply with their request. He finished his *tafsīr* in two years despite his old age and illness, while in fact it was a job of thirty years.⁴

2 Transmission of *al-Kashshāf*

The primary sources do not provide much information about the transmission of *al-Kashshāf* after its completion. The sources mention Abū Ṣāliḥ ‘Abd al-Raḥīm b. ‘Umar al-Tarjumānī, only one student of al-Zamakhsharī who studied *al-Kashshāf* with him over a period of seven years; however, there is no evidence that he transmitted it to others.⁵

Al-Fāsī states that he saw the title of *al-Kashshāf* mentioned in the *Fihris* of the jurist Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad b. ‘Īsā b. Muṭayr al-Yamanī. The *Fihris* describes that Abū al-Ma‘ālī Yaḥyā b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Alī al-Shaybānī, a *qāḍī* in Mecca, transmitted *al-Kashshāf* from al-Zamakhsharī to his nephew Abū al-Ma‘ālī Mājid b. Sulaymān b. al-Fihri, who then transmitted it to others. Al-Fāsī also mentions that al-Zamakhsharī granted Abū al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Silafī, Abū Ṭāhir Barakāt b. Ibrāhīm al-Khushū‘ī, and Umm al-Mu’ayyad Zaynab bint ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sha‘riyya license (*ijāza*) to transmit *al-Kashshāf*.⁶

3 Twenty-nine *surās* of the Qur’ān begin with a group of letters which are called *fawātiḥ al-suwar*, “the openers of the *surās*,” *awā’il al-suwar*, “the beginnings of the *surās*,” *al-ḥurūf al-muqatta‘āt*, “the disconnected letters.” According to al-Suyūṭī, the *fawātiḥ* are simply mysterious letters or symbols known only to God. See A.T. Welch, “al-Ḳur’ān,” *EF*², 5:400–32.

4 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:98.

5 Al-Andarabānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 377.

6 Al-Fāsī, *al-‘Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:138–39; F. Rosenthal, “al-Fāsī,” *EF*², 2:828–29.

According to Gilliot, Abū al-Ṭāhir Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Silafī could be another source of transmission of *al-Kashshāf*. He moved to Alexandria in 511/1117–8 where he settled and remained until his death. He states, “The choice of Alexandria was quasi-strategic, since there he could meet Muslim intellectuals of East and West ...without leaving his domicile, and this purpose was duly achieved. His renown extended far beyond that of a traditionist and a writer since it is impossible to count the number of times that he appears in certificates of audition (*sama’āt*) or of reading, or in licenses of transmission (*ijāzāt*).” He mentions hundreds of works for which al-Silafī is credited for issuing the certificates of authenticity.⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī studied theology with Rukn al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. al-Malāḥimī and Abū Manṣūr. They were also al-Zamakhsharī’s students who studied exegesis with him. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Khwārazmī (d. ca. 560/1165) studied traditions with al-Zamakhsharī and composed his commentary on the Qur’ān. However, there is no proof in the sources that anyone of them transmitted *al-Kashshāf*.⁸

3 Manuscripts of *al-Kashshāf*

Al-Fihris al-shāmil mentions 843 manuscripts of *al-Kashshāf*, out of which 443 bear the date or century in which they were copied, and are available in various libraries and museums of the world.⁹ Out of 443 dated manuscripts, Lane analyzed 250 manuscripts most of which are in Istanbul. According to his analysis, the earliest (Feyzullāh 221, dated 542/1148) was copied only four years after al-Zamakhsharī’s death and fourteen years after he had finished the commentary in Mecca. The most recent manuscript given in *al-Fihris* is in Riyāḍ which is dated 1301/1882. This indicates that there never was a time when somebody somewhere was not copying al-Zamakhsharī’s *tafsīr*.¹⁰

Lane also describes the geographic dispersion of *al-Kashshāf*. Of the 250 manuscripts, only forty-one provide the name of the place where they were copied. The names of these places were taken directly from the actual manuscripts, not from the catalogues. All of these manuscripts have a date also, although in a

⁷ C. Gilliot, “al-Silafī,” *EF*, 9:607–9.

⁸ Al-Andarabānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 368, 377, 382; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:100; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:123.

⁹ *Al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:368–510.

¹⁰ Lane, *Traditional Mu’tazilite Qur’ān Commentary*, 59.

few cases a definite date of a manuscript's completion is not certain. He concludes that,

These manuscripts were copied in the great capitals of the Muslim world: Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, and Istanbul; as well as important centers and regional capitals: Aq Sarāy, Damaghān, Gaza, Hamāt, Iṣfahān, Jurjāniyya, Kāth, Konya, Mosul, Nicaea (Iznīq), Raqqa, Shīrāz, and Tabrīz. As these names indicate, from Khwārazm where the first dated manuscript was copied in 542 H, the *Kashshāf* spread to every region of the Muslim world: Khwārazm, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Turkey.¹¹

4 Issue of *khalq al-Qur'ān*

All biographical sources mention that al-Zamakhsharī was a Mu'tazilite and adhered to the Ḥanafī school of *fiqh* and expressed his theological viewpoint publicly.¹² He was proud to be a Mu'tazilite, and it is reported that when he used to visit his friends and seek permission to enter, when asked about his identification, he would reply that Abū al-Qāsim, the Mu'tazilite was on the door (*abū al-Qāsim al-mu'tazilī bi al-bāb*).¹³

According to Ibn Khallikān, when al-Zamakhsharī composed *al-Kashshāf* the first time, he wrote in the introduction, "Praise be to God who created the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llāh alladhī khalaqa al-Qur'ān*). When he was told that if he left it behind in this form, people would renounce it and nobody would desire to read it.,then he changed it with the statement, "Praise be to God who made the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llāh alladhī ja'ala al-Qur'ān*). Ibn Khallikān states that according to them (Mu'tazilites), *ja'ala* (to make) means *khalaqa* (to create) and both words have the same meaning. He further mentions that he saw in many manuscripts, "Praise be to God who revealed the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llāh alladhī anzala al-Qur'ān*); however, this amendment was made by the people and not by the author himself.¹⁴ Al-Dhahabī, al-Fāsī, and Ibn al-'Imād narrate the same account as mentioned by Ibn Khallikān.¹⁵

11 Lane, *Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary*, 61.

12 Abū Faraj 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Alī Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam fī al-tā'rikh al-mulūk wa-al-umam*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā and Muṣṭafā 'Abd al-Qādir 'Aṭā (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1992), 18:37–38; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2688; al-Dhahabī, *Tā'rikh al-Islām*, 36: 489; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:279; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41.

13 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:170.

14 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:170.

15 Al-Dhahabī, *Tā'rikh al-Islām*, 36:489; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:141; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 4:120.

Abū al-Fidā' (d. 732/1331) states that *al-Kashshāf* is the commentary (of al-Zamakhsharī) and it openly deals with the Mu'tazilite creed. He started his commentary with the statement: "Praise be to God who created the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llah alladhī khalaqa al-Qur'ān*). Then his companions modified it and wrote, "Praise be to God who made the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llah alladhī ja'ala al-Qur'ān*).¹⁶

Ibn al-Wardī mentions that his (al-Zamakhsharī's) introductory statement of *al-Kashshāf* exegesis began with, "Praise be to God who created the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llah alladhī khalaqa al-Qur'ān*). Then afterwards, he changed it with "Praise be to God who revealed the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llah alladhī anzala al-Qur'ān*).¹⁷

Al-Yāf'ī (d. 768/1367) describes that when he (al-Zamakhsharī) composed the book (*al-Kashshāf*), he introduced it with the statement, "Praise be to God who created the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llah alladhī khalaqa al-Qur'ān*). When he was told that if he left the book in this form, people would avoid it reading, then he changed it with the words, "Praise be to God who revealed the Qur'ān" (*alḥamdu li-llah alladhī anzala al-Qur'ān*). It is also said that it was a modification of the people, not of the writer.¹⁸

It can be observed that there are variations of accounts in the sources about two main issues. The first issue deals with the words *khalaqa* (created), *ja'ala* (made) and *anzala* (revealed) in the introduction of *al-Kashshāf*. According to Ibn Khallikān, al-Dhahabī, al-Fāsī, and Ibn al-'Imād the change was made from *khalaqa* to *ja'ala* and both words are synonymous in their meanings. On the other hand, Abū al-Fidā', Ibn al-Wardī, and al-Yāf'ī mention that the word *khalaqa* was substituted with *anzala* which has different meanings. The second issue concerns as to who actually made the change in the text. According to Ibn Khallikān and al-Fāsī, the amendment was made by the people and not by the author himself. However, al-Dhahabī does not mention who made the change. Abū al-Fidā' says that it was al-Zamakhsharī's companions who later modified the text, while Ibn al-Wardī (d. 749/1349) states that the text was amended after his death and like al-Dhahabī does not specify who made it. Al-Yāf'ī's account is contradictory because he says that al-Zamakhsharī changed the word *khalaqa* with *anzala* himself. Then he adds that it was the correction made by the people not by the author.

¹⁶ Abū al-Fidā', *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar*, 3:25.

¹⁷ Ibn al-Wardī, *Tā'rikh* 2:63.

¹⁸ Al-Yāf'ī, *Mir'āt al-janān* 3:270.

There are some sources which indicate that al-Zamakhsharī did not write *khalāqa* in the introduction of his *tafsīr*. The author of *al-Qāmūs*, Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Firūzābādī (d. 817/1415) says, “Some scholars are of the opinion, while commenting on *al-Kashshāf* that al-Zamakhsharī wrote in his original *tafsīr* (that God) created (*khalāqa*) the Qur'ān in place of revealed (*anzala*) the Qur'ān which was changed either by the author himself or someone else safeguarding against the ostensible negative reaction of the people. However, it is completely wrong because I presented this view to my teacher Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 756/1355) who denied it vehemently.”¹⁹ According to al-Firūzābādī's teacher, this statement was far from being true due to two reasons. The first is that it was of no importance for al-Zamakhsharī to write that it (the Qur'ān) was revealed. The second reason being that he did not conceal his Mu'tazilite position, rather he was proud of it. Furthermore, in the subsequent manuscripts (of *al-Kashshāf*) the meanings are very clear and it was not considered impertinent. Al-Firūzābādī also states, “I saw the manuscript in the handwriting of al-Zamakhsharī preserved in the mausoleum of Abū Ḥanīfa which was free from any sign of erasure or correction.”²⁰

5 Commentaries on *al-Kashshāf*

Since its inception, *al-Kashshāf* has been subject to orthodox Sunnī criticism which centered on the basic principles of Mu'tazilite theology. In fact, no other book in the history of *tafsīr* has been commented upon in the forms of *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars* more than *al-Kashshāf*. Hājji Khalifa (d. 1067/1657) in his *Kashf al-zūnūn* lists approximately fifty commentaries.²¹ *Al-Fihris al-shāmil* mentions seventy-three *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars*; however, twelve of these commentaries have been written by unknown authors.²² According to Lane, more than eighty scholars have written *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars*. Some of these commentaries have been written by well-known scholars, while other scholars are known by the names on the manuscripts of the *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars* that have survived, although some works on the *Kashshāf* bear no name at all. Although more than eighty commentaries

¹⁹ Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Firūzābādī studied with Taqī al-Dīn al-Subkī in Damascus in 750/1349 and afterwards accompanied him to Jerusalem in the same year. See H. Fleisch, “al-Firūzābādī,” *EF*, 2: 926–27; J. Schacht and C.E. Bosworth, “al-Subkī,” *EF*, 9:743–45.

²⁰ Hājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zūnūn*, 2:1482.

²¹ Hājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zūnūn*, 2:1475–84.

²² *Al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:511–28.

have been written, none has been published in a critical edition, nor has been studied in a systematic manner. However, some of these works have been incorporated into the margins of different editions of *al-Kashshāf*.²³ With the exception of the first two printed editions of *al-Kashshāf*²⁴ all of them have two, three, or four *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *shawāhids* of the following authors either in the margins, or as footnotes, or at the end of al-Zamakhsharī's *tafsīr*. They are: Ibn al-Munayyir, al-Zaylā'ī, al-Jurjānī, Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, Muḥibb al-Dīn Afandī, and al-Marzūqī.

Ibn al-Munayyir al-Iskandarī Nāṣir al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Muḥammad was a great scholar in grammar, literature, Arabic, jurisprudence, theology, and exegesis. He was unparalleled in rhetoric and calligraphy. He composed *al-Intiṣāf min ṣāḥib al-Kashshāf* in which he refutes the Mu'tazilite viewpoints of *al-Kashshāf* and provides Sunnī orthodox response. However, he generously praises the lexicological and grammatical knowledge and eloquent style of al-Zamakhsharī.²⁵

Al-Zaylā'ī Jamāl al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh b. Yūsuf (d. 762/1360) was a Ḥanafī jurist, *ḥadīth* transmitter and theologian who wrote *Risāla fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Kashshāf wa-mā fīhī qīṣaṣ wa-athār*. Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1449) made an abridgement of the *Risāla* entitled *al-Kāff al-shāff fī taḥrīr aḥādīth al-Kashshāf*. It deals with the traditions mentioned in *al-*

23 Lane states that, "Some of the glosses in Istanbul were of a few pages each and were usually to be found in bound manuscripts containing a number of other works or fragments. The card catalogue of the Suleymaniye listed about thirty *ḥawāshī*, a third of which were well under 100 folios in length (the longest was 67 folios). While there were 40 to 50 copies of such well-known commentaries as those by Sa'd al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī and al-Sayyid al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī; many of the lesser known commentaries were limited to one or two copies. A few copies of the *Kashshāf* even had an anonymous *ḥāshiya* in the margins. For example, at the end of the fourth *rub'* of MS. Feyzullāh 223, a marginal note reads: *tammāt al-ḥāshiya* [Tuesday, 7 Ramaḍān, 772 H]. There is no indication as to whose *ḥāshiya* it is. MS. Feyzullāh 223 was completed on Wednesday, 16 Rabi' II, 777 A.H., after the gloss on the fourth *rub'* had been finished. This date is given at the end of the third *rub'*, indicating that it and not the fourth *rub'* was the last to be copied; no name or date is given at the end of the fourth *rub'*. See Lane, *Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary*, 86–87.

24 The first edition: *The Qoran; with the commentary of the Imam Aboo al-Qasim Mahmood bin 'Omar al-Zamakhshari, entitled "The Kashshaf 'an Haqaiq al-Tanzil"* I-II, was edited by W. Nassau Lees [...], and Mawlawis Khadim Hosain and Abd al-Hayi, Calcutta, printed and published by W. Nassau Lees in 1856–1862. William Nassau Lees wrote a good introduction in English and described the six manuscripts he had at his disposal. He also had two or three other copies without dates. The second edition was published by Dār al-Ṭibā'a al-Miṣriyya – al-Maṭba'a al-[Amīriyya], Bulāq in 1281/1864.

25 Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:384; Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1477; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:513; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 2:161–62.

Kashshāf, and classifies them in *ṣaḥīḥ* (sound), *ḥasan* (fair), *ḍaʿīf* (weak), and *mawḍūʿ* (spurious), and is printed in most of the *Kashshāf* editions.²⁶

Al-Jurjānī ʿAlī b. Muḥammad b. ʿAlī (d. 816/1413), called *al-Sayyid al-Sharīf*, was a Ḥanafī theologian and a great scholar in grammar, logic, law, and language of his time. In 766/1365 he went to Harāt to study under Qutb al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Rāzī al-Taḥṭānī, but he advised him to go to his pupil Mubārakshāh in Egypt; however he stayed in Harāt. He studied with Muḥammad al-Fenārī and went with him to Egypt where he heard Mubārakshāh and Akmal al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd. According to al-Suyūṭī, he wrote more than fifty books and composed a commentary on *al-Kashshāf* which he did not finish. His other titles are commentary on al-Bayḍāwī's *Tafsīr*, commentary on *al-Muwāfiq* of al-ʿUḍad, commentary on *al-Tajrīd* of al-Naṣīr al-Ṭūsī, commentary on *al-Tadhkira al-Naṣīriyya* on physiognomy, *ḥāshiya* on the commentary of al-Taftāzānī's *al-Tanqīḥ* on jurisprudence and commentary on *al-Muṭawwil* of al-Taftāzānī on rhetoric and eloquence. His *Ḥāshiya ʿalā tafsīr al-Kashshāf* is also an orthodox explanation of al-Zamakhsharī's *tafsīr*.²⁷

Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Faḍl Aḥmad b. ʿAlī was a Shāfiʿī, *ḥadīth* scholar, *qāḍī*, historian and poet. He studied with Zakī al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. ʿAlī b. Muḥammad (d. 787/1385), Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Ibn Qaṭṭān, Zayn al-Dīn al-ʿIrāqī (d. 806/1404) and ʿIzz al-Dīn Ibn Jamāʿa (d. 819/1416). He was a prolific writer and author of approximately one hundred and fifty books. His famous titles are *Fath al-bārī*, a great commentary on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *al-Isāba fī tamyiz al-ṣaḥāba*, *Lisān al-mizān*, *Thahdhīb al-tahdhīb*, *al-Durar al-kāmina fī aʿyān al-mīʾa al-thāmina*, a commentary on *al-Irshād* which deals with al-Shāfiʿī's jurisprudence, and *Dīwān shiʿr*. He composed an abridgement of Jamāl al-Dīn al-Zaylāʿī's *Risāla fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Kashshāf wa-ma fiḥi qīṣaṣ wa-athār* entitled *al-Kāff al-shāff fī taḥrīr aḥādīth al-Kashshāf*.²⁸

Muḥibb al-Dīn Afandī Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. Taqī al-Dīn (d. 1014/1605) was a Ḥanafī jurist and expert in several sciences. He wrote a commentary on the *shawāhid* used by al-Zamakhsharī in the *Kashshāf* titled *Tanzīl al-āyāt ʿalā al-shawāhid min al-abyāt*. This work is included in some of the *Kashshāf* editions.²⁹

26 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1481; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 6:165–66.

27 Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:196–97; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 7:216; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:517; Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1479; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:517; A.S. Tritton, “Al-Djurdjānī, ʿAlī b. Muḥammad,” *EF*², 2:602–3.

28 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1481; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 2:20–22; F. Rosenthal, “Ibn Ḥadjar al-ʿAsqalānī,” *EF*², 3:776–79.

29 Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 3:16.

Al-Marzūqī Muḥammad ‘Aylān (d. 1355/1936) was a Shāfi‘ī theologian, Qur’ān commentator and scholar in several sciences. He is author of two books *Ḥāshiya ‘alā tafsīr al-Kashshāf* and *Mashāhid al-inṣāf ‘alā shawāhid al-Kashshāf*. Both of them are also included in most of the *Kashshāf* editions.³⁰

Al-Bayḍāwī ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Umar Nāṣir al-Dīn was a Shāfi‘ī theologian and reputed for wide learning. He wrote on a number of subjects including Qur’ān exegesis, law, jurisprudence, scholastic theology, and grammar. His famous work is the commentary on the Qur’ān entitled *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta’wīl* which he composed in response to *al-Kashshāf*. According to Robson, despite his refutation and amendments to the *Kashshāf*’s Mu’tazilite views, on occasions he retained them, possibly without fully realizing their significance.³¹ Watt considers, “This was intended as a manual for instruction in colleges or mosque-schools, and therefore aims at giving in concise form all that was best and soundest in previous commentaries, including important variant interpretations.”³² Al-Subkī and al-Suyūṭī also mention al-Bayḍāwī’s dependence on al-Zamakhsharī. In addition, both of them list a summarized version of the *Kashshāf* entitled *Mukhtaṣar al-Kashshāf* by him.³³

Besides Ibn al-Munayyir, al-Zayla‘ī, al-Jurjānī, Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, Muḥibb al-Dīn Afandī, al-Marzūqī and al-Bayḍāwī, there are a number of commentators who wrote *ḥāshiyas* on *al-Kashshāf*. They are as follows:

1. Abū al-Baqā‘ al-‘Ukbarī Muḥibb al-Dīn ‘Abd Allāh b. al-Ḥusayn (d. 616/1219) was Ḥanbalī juristprudent, grammarian, philologist, Qur’ān reciter, exegete, and transmitter of *ḥadīth*. He studied with several distinguished scholars, such as the grammarian Ibn al-Khashshāb, and with experts on *fiqh* and *qirā’āt*. He served as a répétiteur (*mu’id*) to Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200). According to Mohammed Yalaoui, his reputation as a grammarian and commentator attracted pupils from distant parts. Al-Suyūṭī mentions that he was trustworthy in the transmission of *ḥadīth*, excellent and distinguished in his character, much committed to religion, modest in his disposition, and frequent visitor to those who were in charge of teaching and education. Amongst his disciples were e.g. ‘Abd al-Ḥamid b. Hibat Allāh Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd (d. 655/1256), commentator on the *Nahja al-balāgha*, the biographer,

30 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu‘jam al-mu‘allifīn*, 11:73–74; Ziriklī, *al-A‘lām*, 6:310.

31 J. Robson, “al-Bayḍāwī,” *EF*², 1:1129.

32 Montgomery Watt and Richard Bell, *Introduction to the Qur’ān* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 169.

33 Tāj al-Dīn Abū Naṣr ‘Abd al-Wahhāb b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd al-Kāfi al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi‘iyya al-kubrā*, ed. Maḥmūd Muḥammad al-Ṭanāḥī and ‘Abd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥilw. (Cairo: Hijr lil-Ṭabā‘a wa al-Nashr wa’l-Tawzī‘ wa’l I‘lān, 1992), 8:157; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:50.

al-Mundhirī (d. 656/1257), the historian, Ibn al-Najjār (d. 643/1245) and al-Dubaythī (d. 637/1239). Out of some sixty titles attributed to him, most of them deal with grammatical teaching and philological glosses on texts: the Qurʾān, *ḥadīth*, ancient poets and poetry, Sibawayh's *shawāhid*, the sermons of Ibn Nubāta and the *Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī. In addition, he wrote many commentaries on well-known works. According to *al-Fihris*, he composed a gloss on *al-Kashshāf*.³⁴

2. Al-Sulamī ʿIzz al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. ʿAbd al-Salām (d. 660/1262), renowned as “Authority of the scholars,” (*sultān al-ʿulamāʾ*) was Shāfiʿī jurist and a great scholar in theology and exegesis. He studied with Fakhr al-Dīn Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 620/1223), Qāḍī Jamāl al-Dīn b. al-Ḥarastānī (d. 614/1217) and Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233). He was expert in jurisprudence and his judicial approach centered around the concept of “the interest of the community” (*al-maṣāliḥ*). He was an *imām* at the Umayyad mosque in Damascus and professor of Shāfiʿī law at the Sālīhiyya college, founded in Cairo by al-Malik al-Sālīḥ. His works include *al-Qawāʿid al-kubrā* on jurisprudence, *al-Ghāya fī ikhtisār al-nihāya* on al-Shāfiʿī's jurisprudence, *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān*, and *Mukhtaṣar al-Kashshāf*.³⁵
3. Al-ʿIrāqī ʿAlam al-Dīn Abū Ishāq ʿAbd al-Karīm b. ʿAlī b. ʿUmar al-Anṣarī (d. 704/1304) was a Shāfiʿī Qurʾān exegete. He was jurisprudent, theologian, man of letters, and excellent prose writer. His work *Tahdhīb al-Kashshāf ʿalā sabīl al-inṣāf* is a gloss on *al-Kashshāf* in which he defends al-Zamakhsharī against Ibn al-Munayyir's *al-Intiṣāf*. His other books are commentary on *al-Tanbīh* of al-Shirāzī's *Furūʾ al-fiqh al-Shāfiʿī* and *Tafsīr al-Qurʾān al-karīm*.³⁶
4. Al-Sukūnī Abū ʿAlī ʿUmar b. Muḥammad b. al-Khalīl (d. 707/1307) was a Mālikī Qurʾān reciter, theologian, exegete, and logician. His works include *al-Manhaj al-mashriq fī al-ʿitirad ʿala kathīr min ahl al-manṭiq*, and *Kitāb al-arbaʿin masʿala fī uṣūl al-dīn ʿalā madhhab ahl al-sunna*. In addition, he wrote *al-Tamyīz li-mā awdaʾahu al-Zamakhsharī min al-ʿitizāl fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-ʿazīz* in which he criticizes the Muʿtazilite contents of *al-Kashshāf*.³⁷

³⁴ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:38–40; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 6:46–47; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:513; Mohammed Yalaoui, “al-ʿUkbarī.” *Elʿ*, 10:790–91.

³⁵ Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 5:249; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:527; E. Chaumont, “al-Sulamī,” *Elʿ*, 9:812–13.

³⁶ Ḥajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1477; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 5:319; Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 4:53; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:514.

³⁷ Kaḥḥāla, Ziriklī and *al-Fihris* give the title *al-Tamyīz li-mā awdaʾahu al-Zamakhsharī min al-ʿitizāl fī tafsīr al-kitāb al-ʿazīz*, whereas in Ḥajjī Khalīfa's *Kashf al-ẓunūn* the title is *Kitāb al-*

5. Al-Shirāzī Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shirāzī Maḥmūd b. Mas'ūd (d. 710/1311) was a distinguished scholar in exegesis, jurisprudence, theology, mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, and medicine. Due to his versatility in these sciences, Abū al-Fidā' gave him the title of *al-mustafannīn* (experienced in many fields). He studied with Ḍiyā' al-Dīn Mas'ūd al-Kāzarūnī, Kamāl al-Dīn Khayr al-Kāzarūnī, Sharaf al-Dīn al-Zakī al-Rushkānī, Shams al-Dīn al-Qurṭubī and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭusī. Towards the end of his life he was devoted to the study of *ḥadīth* and wrote two critical books, *Jam' uṣūl* and *Sharḥ*. According to al-Subkī and Isnawī, Quṭb al-Dīn surpassed in rational sciences (*bara'a fī al-ma'qūlāt*), and he was one of the most intelligent scholars (*ghāyat al-dhakā'*). Ibn Ḥajar mentions that his knowledge was comparable to the vastness of the sea (*buḥūr al-'ilm*) and was known as one of the most erudite commentators (*shāriḥ al-'allāma*) among the contemporary distinguished scholars. This title underscores his great prestige as an intellectual. Ṣafī al-Dīn al-Muṭrib reports that he taught al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashahāf*, and Ibn Sīnā's (d. 428/1037) *al-Qānūn* and *al-Shifā'* in Damascus. He led the life of a Ṣūfī. He had many pupils, among them was Kamāl al-Dīn al-Fārisī who encouraged al-Taḥṭānī (d. 766/1364) to write *Muḥākamat* on the *Ishārāt* of Ibn Sīnā on points disputed between Naṣīr al-Dīn and Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī. However, he neglected his religious duties, but al-Suyūṭī mentions that in Tabrīz he always performed his *ṣalāts* with the congregation. His commentary on the *Ḥikma al-ishrāq* of Suhrawardī is undoubtedly connected with his religious attitude. Ḥajjī Khalīfa emphasizes that he distinguished himself in theology. He annotated the *Qur'ān* very thoroughly and in a fashion that won recognition in his *Faṭḥ al-mannān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. In his *Fī mushkilāt al-Qur'ān*, he dealt with passages in the *Qur'ān* difficult to reconcile with one another. He wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl* of al-Zamakhsharī.³⁸
6. Al-Shuqqār Quṭb al-Dīn Abu al-Fath Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd (d. 712/1312) was exegete and grammarian. He wrote commentary on *al-Lubāb fī 'ilm al-i'rāb*

Tamyīz 'alā *al-Kashshāf*. See Ḥajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1482; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 7:309; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām*, 5:63; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:514.

38 Al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, 10: 386; Jamāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. al-Ḥasan Isnawī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi'iyya*, ed. 'Abd Allāh al-Jabūrī, (Baghdād: Ri'āsat Diwān al-Awqāf Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-Islāmī, 1970–71), 2: 120; Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Durar al-kāmina fī a'yān al-mī'a al-thamāniya*, (Ḥyderābād Deccan: Majlis Dā'ira al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, 1929–32), 4:339–41; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 1: 204–5; Ḥajjī Khalīfa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1477; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 12:202–203; *Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:514; E. Wiedermann, "Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shirāzī," *Er*, 5:547–48.

of Isfara'īnī. He also made a summary of *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Taqrīb al-tafsīr* in 698/1299.³⁹

7. Ibn al-Bannā' Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān al-Azdī (d. 721/1321) was a mathematician and great scholar in many sciences. He composed numerous books on mathematics, rational sciences, algebra, and theology. He wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁴⁰
8. Al-Mardāwī Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-'Abbās Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (d. 728/1328) was a Ḥanbali jurist, theologian, grammarian, reciter of the Qur'ān, and exegete. Kaḥḥāla lists *Fath al-qadīr fī al-tafsīr*, Ziriklī gives the name of *Mukhtaṣar al-Kashshāf* and *al-Fihris* mentions *Mukhtaṣar al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq al-tanzīl*.⁴¹
9. Al-Kindī 'Imād al-Dīn al-Ḥusayn b. Abī Bakr b. Abī al-Ḥusayn (d. 741/1340) was an exegete, transmitter of *ḥadīth*, jurist, and *qāḍī* in Alexandria. Kaḥḥāla states that he composed a *tafsīr* in ten volumes. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a gloss entitled *al-Kaḥḥāl bi-ma'ānī al-tanzīl 'alā al-Kashshāf*.⁴²
10. Al-Ṭībī Sharf al-Dīn al-Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh (d. 743/1342) was a great scholar in a variety of sciences. Al-Suyūṭī mentions him as an eminent and famous scholar in rational sciences, Arabic, and eloquence. He quotes Ibn Ḥajar that al-Ṭībī was exceedingly intellectual who used to go deep in extracting the meanings from the Qur'ān and the traditions, in the forefront for spreading the knowledge, pleasant personality, strongly opposed to philosophy and innovation, and vehemently in love with God and His Prophet, very modest and always supporting the students in their religious sciences. He was very rich due to inheritance and his own business, but always spent his wealth in charity until he became poor in his last days. He composed his commentary on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Futūḥ al-ghayb fī al-kashf 'an qinā' al-rayb*. His other works are *al-Kāshif 'an ḥaqā'iq*

³⁹ The *Fihris al-shāmil* gives the year of his death 698/1299. Kaḥḥāla states that he was still alive in 712/1312, while Ziriklī writes that he died after 712/1312. Both Kaḥḥāla and Ziriklī mention that he finished *Sharḥ al-Lubāb fī 'ilm al-i'rāb lil-Isfara'īnī* in 712/1312. Ḥājji Khalifa considers that perhaps this Quṭb al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Mas'ūd al-Sirāfi al-Fālī al-Shuqqār is Quṭb al-Dīn Maḥmūd b. Mas'ūd al-Shirāzi. See Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1481; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 12:20; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām*, 7:96; *al-Fihris al-shāmil* 2:527.

⁴⁰ Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1482; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 2:126–27.

⁴¹ Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 2:125–26; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām*, 1:222–3; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:528.

⁴² Kaḥḥāla gives 741/1340 as the year of his death, the *Fihris* mentions 720/1320. See Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 3:316–17; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:514.

al-sunan al-nabawiyya, al-Tibyān fī ma'ānī wa-al-bayān, Muqaddima fī 'ilm al-hisāb and *Asmā' al-rijāl*.⁴³

11. Al-Qazwīnī Sirāj al-Dīn Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Umar al-Fārisī (d. 745/1344) was an exegete. He wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf* with the title *al-Kashf 'an mushkilāt al-Kashshāf*. Kaḥḥāla mentions another book *Naṣīḥat al-muslim al-mushfiq li-man ibtilā' bi-ḥubb al-manṭiq* written by him.⁴⁴
12. Al-Jārabardī Fakhr al-Dīn Abū al-Mukāram Aḥmad b. al-Ḥasan (d. 746/1345–46) was a distinguished scholar and jurist. He was religious, munificent, venerable, and assiduous for knowledge and cared for the benefits of students. He composed a gloss on *al-Kashshāf* in ten volumes. Amongst his other works are commentary on *al-Ḥawī al-saghīr* of al-Qazwīnī dealing with Shāfi'ī's jurisprudence, entitled *al-Hādī*, but he did not complete the commentary on *Minhāj* of al-Bayḍāwī about the principles of jurisprudence and supercommentary of the commentary on *al-Mufaṣṣal* of Ibn al-Ḥājjib which deals with grammar.⁴⁵
13. Al-Yamanī 'Imād al-Dīn Yaḥyā b. al-Qāsim al-'Alawī al-Fāḍil (d. 750/1348/9) was a Shāfi'ī commentator of the Qur'ān, grammarian, and man of letters. According to al-Suyūṭī, he was well versed with *al-Kashshāf* and composed a gloss on it. Ḥājjī Khalifa states that he wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Durar al-aṣḍāf min ḥawāshī al-Kashshāf* [*Durar al-aṣḍāf fī ḥall 'uqd al-Kashshāf*] in two volumes. Afterwards, he composed another commentary of *al-Kashshāf* which was known as *Tuḥfat al-ashrāf fī kashf ghawāmiḍ al-Kashshāf*. Kaḥḥāla and Ziriklī also mention that he wrote two glosses on *al-Kashshāf*, one *Durar al-aṣḍāf fī ḥall 'uqd al-Kashshāf* and the other *Tuḥfat al-ashrāf fī kashf ghawāmiḍ al-Kashshāf*.⁴⁶
14. Al-Taḥṭānī Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad (Maḥmūd) b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī (d. 766/1364–5) was physician, philosopher, grammarian and expert in exe-

⁴³ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:522–3; Ḥājjī Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1478; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍat al-jannāt*, 8:125; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 4:53; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:515.

⁴⁴ Ḥājjī Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1480; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 7:289; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām* 5:49; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:515.

⁴⁵ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:303; Ḥājjī Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1478; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 1:198–99; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:515.

⁴⁶ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:339; Ḥājjī Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1480; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 13:219–20; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām* 8:163; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:515.

genesis, eloquence and religious sciences. He wrote the commentary on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Taqrib*.⁴⁷

15. Al-Aqsarā'i Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. (Maḥmūd) Muḥammad (d. ca. 771/1370) was a great scholar in Arabic, religious, and rational sciences. He wrote commentary on *al-Īdāḥ fī al-ma'ānī wa-al-bayān* of al-Qazwīnī, commentary on *Majma' al-baḥrayn wa-multaqī al-nahrayn* of Ibn al-Sā'ātī which deals with Ḥanafī jurisprudence, commentary on *al-Ghāya al-quṣwa fī dirāyat al-fatwa* of al-Bayḍāwī, and commentary on *Mawjiz al-qānūn* of Ibn al-Nafīs on medicine. Ḥājji Khalīfa mentions that al-Aqsarā'i in his commentary on *al-Kashshāf* criticized Quṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī al-Taḥṭānī's *al-Taqrib*, a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*. 'Abd al-Karīm b. 'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 830/1427) defended the objections of al-Aqsarā'i in his book *Muḥākamāt*.⁴⁸
16. Al-Dāmaghānī Iftikhār al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Naṣr Allāh b. Muḥammad (d. 775/1374) was a great scholar in rational and traditional sciences. According to Kaḥḥāla, his works include *al-Kāshif fī al-tafsīr* in seven volumes, commentary on *al-'Uyūn* of al-'Aḍad al-Dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān, commentary on *al-Ishārāt* entitled *Tanqīḥ al-'ibārāt fī tawḍīḥ al-ishārāt*, and commentary on *al-Mudrik* in logic. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Kāshif al-sajāf 'an wajh al-Kashshāf*. Most probably, *al-Kāshif fī al-tafsīr* may be an abbreviation of *Kāshif al-sajaf 'an wajh al-Kashshāf*.⁴⁹
17. Al-Bābartī Akmal al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Dimashqī (d. 786/1384) was a Ḥanafī scholar, jurist, scholastic theologian, exegete, *ḥadīth* transmitter, grammarian, and an eloquent orator. He was a student of Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī. He wrote commentary on *al-Kashshāf*. His other works include commentary on *al-Mashāriq*, commentary on *Mukhtaṣar* of Ibn Ḥājib, commentary on *'Aqida al-Ṭūsī*, commentary on *al-Hidāya* on jurisprudence, commentary on *Alfiyya* of Ibn Mu'aṭ on grammar, commentary on *al-Manār*, and commentary on *al-Bazdawwī*.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Ḥājji Khalīfa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1478; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 11:215–16; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:525.

⁴⁸ Kaḥḥāla gives al-Aqsarā'i's year of death 771/1370, while the *Fihris* mentions that he was alive in 780/1379. See Ḥājji Khalīfa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1478; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 11:192; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:516.

⁴⁹ Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 12:78–9; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:516.

⁵⁰ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:239–40; Ḥājji Khalīfa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1478; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 11:298–99.

18. Al-Kirmānī Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yūsuf b. ‘Alī (d. 786/1384) was an outstanding scholar in jurisprudence, *ḥadīth*, Qur’ān commentary, eloquence, and Arabic. In addition to *Unmūdḥaj al-Kashshāf* which is an abstract of *al-Kashshāf*, he composed commentaries on *Tafsīr al-Baydāwī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, *al-Muwāfiq*, *Mukhtaṣar* of Ibn al-Ḥājib entitled *al-Sab‘a al-sayyārah*, *al-Fawā’id al-Ghayāthiyya* on rhetorics and *al-Jawāhir*.⁵¹
19. Al-Taftāzānī Sa’d al-Dīn Mas’ūd b. ‘Umar (d. 793/1390) known as “*al-allāma*” was a renowned scholar of grammar, rhetoric, law, theology, logic, and exegesis of the Qur’ān. He was expert in both Ḥanafī and Shāfi‘ī law and *uṣūl*. Faṣīḥ al-Āwāfi mentions in Faryūmad that al-Taftāzānī completed his commentary on *al-Taṣrīf al-‘Izzī* by al-Zanjānī on Arabic morphology in 738/1338 at the age of sixteen. He became attached to the ruler of Harāt. Mu‘izz al-Dīn Kart, to whom he dedicated his *Sharḥ al-Talkhiṣ al-muṭawwal* in 748/1347. Then he joined Jānī Beg, Khān of the Golden Horde to whom he dedicated his *Mukhtaṣar al-ma‘ānī* in 756/1355. When Timūr conquered Khwārazm in 759/1379, Mu‘izz al-Dīn Kart’s son Malik Muḥammad, ruler of Sarkhs, asked his nephew Pīr Muḥammad b. Ghiyāth al-Dīn to obtain Timūr’s permission for al-Taftāzānī to join him in Sarkhs and he was there in 782/1380. Subsequently, due to his eminence in scholarship, Timūr insisted that he come to Samarqand. Al-Taftāzānī accepted the offer and stayed there until his death in 793/1390. However, during this period a scholarly rivalry took place between him and al-Sharīf ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī, whom Timūr brought to Samarqand after his conquest of Sirāz in 789/1387. A public debate between him and al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī took place in the presence of Timūr, about al-Zamakhsharī’s exegesis of Qur’ān.⁵² The Mu’tazilite scholar Nu’mān al-Dīn al-Khwārazmī judged in favor of al-Jurjānī and Timūr backed him. It is said that al-Taftāzānī’s severe grief about this defeat might have hastened his end. His body was carried to Sarkhs where he was buried. Al-Taftāzānī’s fame rests mainly on his commentaries on well-known works in various fields of learning. Later scholars wrote supercommentaries on many of them. His works are commentary on *al-Kashshāf* which was not completed, a Persian commentary on the Qur’ān entitled *Kashf al-asrār wa-‘uddat al-abrār*, a Turkish versified translation of

⁵¹ Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 1:279–80; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifīn*, 13:326.

⁵² It was with regard to the *āya* 5 of *Sūra al-Baqara*: “They are guided by their Lord and they will be successful” (*‘ulā’ika ‘alā hudan min rabbihim wa ‘ulā’ika hum al-muhtadūn*).

Sa'di's *Būstān*, *al-Maqāṣid* on theology, *al-Miftāḥ* on Shāfi'i law, and a collection of Ḥanafī *fatwās*.⁵³

20. Al-Bulqīnī Sirāj al-Dīn 'Umar b. Raslān (d. 805/1403) was the most celebrated jurist of his age, exegete, scholastic theologian, grammarian, and poet. According to Gibb, he was honored by the title of *Shaykh al-Islām*, ranked along with or above the grand *qādīs*, and regarded by some as the *mujaddid* of the eighth century. He composed a commentary on *al-Kashshāf* in three volumes. His other works are *al-Tadrīb* on Shāfi'i's jurisprudence which he could not complete, *Taṣḥīḥ al-minhāj* in six volumes on jurisprudence and *Mahāṣin al-iṣṭilāḥ* on *ḥadīth*.⁵⁴
21. Al-Mu'ayyad bi-Allāh Fakhr al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh b. al-Hādī b. Yahyā b. Hamzā (d. ca. 810/1407) was Zaydī Shī'ite and composed a brief of *al-Kashshāf* entitled *al-Jawhar al-shaffāf al-multaqaṭ min maghāṣat al-Kashshāf*.⁵⁵
22. Al-Firūzābādī Majd al-Dīn Abū Ṭāhir Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb's (d. 817/1415) works were concentrated on the subjects of *tafsīr*, *ḥadīth*, and history, but he excelled in lexicography. According to Ḥājji Khalifa, he wrote two commentaries on *al-Kashshāf*, the first entitled *Quṭbat al-kkashshāf li-ḥall khuṭbāt al-Kashshāf* and the second *Naghbat al-rashshāf min khuṭbāt al-Kashshāf*. He wrote more than fifty works, but his most celebrated book is *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ wa-al-qābūs al-wasīṭ al-jāmi' li-mā dhahaba min kalām al-'Arab shamaṭīṭ*. He wished to write a dictionary in sixty or it is said, in one hundred volumes. His other books are *al-Lāmi' al-'ilm al-'ujāb*, *al-jāmi' bayn al-muḥkam wa-al-'ubāb* which only reached the fifth volume and was not completed, *Fath al-bārī bi-al-samiḥ al-fasiḥ al-jārī* on *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and many other titles.⁵⁶
23. Al-'Irāqī Walī al-Dīn Abū Zar'a Aḥmad b. 'Abd al-Raḥīm (d. 826/1423) was a Shāfi'i jurist, theologian, *ḥadīth* transmitter and expert in some sciences. He was a *qāḍī* and professor. He wrote commentary on *Jam'a al-jawāmi'* of al-Subkī on jurisprudence and commentary on *al-Bahja al-wardiyya* on al-Shāfi'i's jurisprudence. He wrote an abstract of Ibn al-Munayyir's *al-Insāf 'alā*

53 Al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:285; Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1478; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:125; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 12:228–29; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:516; W. Madelung, "al-Taftāzānī," *EF*², 10:88–89.

54 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1479; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām* 5:46; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 7:284–85; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:517; H.A.R. Gibb, "al-Bulqīnī," *EF*², 1:1308–9.

55 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 6:16; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:517.

56 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1480; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 12:118–19; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:525; Fleisch, "al-Firūzābādī," *EF*², 2:926–27.

al-Kashshāf and ‘Alam al-Dīn Abū Ishāq ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Anṣārī’s *Tahdhīb al-Kashshāf ‘alā sabīl al-insāf* in two volumes.⁵⁷

24. Al-Dimashqī ‘Abd al-Karīm b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār (d. 830/1427) wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *al-Muḥākamāt ‘alā al-Kashshāf* and defended the objections raised by al-Aqsarā’ī in his commentary on *al-Kashshāf* in which he criticized Qutb al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Rāzī al-Taḥṭānī’s *al-Taqrīb*, a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁵⁸
25. Al-Fenārī-zāde Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ḥamzā b. Muḥammad (d. 834/1431) was a student of the famous *ṣūfī* scholar Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ishāq al-Qūnawī (d. 672/1274). He studied under some of the most distinguished scholars of his age in Anatolia and Egypt. He was a scholar in rational and traditional sciences. He wrote *Fuṣūl al-badā’i*, a compilation on the *uṣūl al-fiqh*, commentary of *Isāghujī* on logic and commentary of *al-Fawā’id al-Ghayāthia* on rhetoric and eloquence. The *Fihris* mentions a commentary on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Ta’līq ‘ala awā’il al-Kashshāf*.⁵⁹
26. Jamāl al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Abī al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Ja’far (d. 837/1433) composed an abridgement of *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Tajrīd al-Kashshāf ma’a ziyāda nukat laṭāf*.⁶⁰
27. Muṣannifak ‘Ala’ al-Dīn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Mas’ūd al-Shāhrūdī (d. 875/1470) was a Ḥanafī theologian and Persian scholar. Most of his works are commentaries or supercommentaries on Arabic texts. These are *al-Aḥkām wa-al-ḥudud* on Ḥanafī jurisprudence, glosses on al-Taftāzānī’s *Sharḥ al-Muṭawwal*, ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī’s *Sharḥ al-Miftāh* and *Ḥāshiya ‘alā al-Kashshāf*.⁶¹
28. Al-Fenārī Badr al-Dīn Ḥasan Chelebī b. Muḥammad Shāh b. Ḥamza (d. 886/1481) was a Ḥanafī scholar in various sciences. Most of his works are supercommentaries on the commentaries. He wrote a supercommentary on al-Taftāzānī’s commentary of *al-Muṭawwal* which deals with rhetoric and eloquence and a supercommentary of al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī’s commentary of al-Ījī’s *Muwāqif* on scholastic theology. He annotated *Durar al-ḥukkām* of

57 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1479–80; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 1:270–71; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:517.

58 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1478; *al-Fihris al-shāmil* 2:527.

59 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 9:272–73; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:511; J.R. Walsh, “Fenārī-zāde,” *EF*², 2:879.

60 *Al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:518.

61 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1480; Ziriklī, *al-A’lām*, 5:9; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 7:240; J.T.P. de Bruijn, “Muṣannifak,” *EF*², 7:663.

Mullā Khusrow on Ḥanafī jurisprudence and wrote a supercommentary on al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī's commentary of *al-Kashshāf*.⁶²

29. Al-Taftāzānī al-Ḥafīd Shaykh al-Islām Yaḥyā b. Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd b. 'Umar (d. 887/1482) was a Ḥanafī exegete. He composed a supercommentary on the previous commentary written by his grandfather on *al-Kashshāf*.⁶³
30. Al-Khayālī (d. 893/1488) wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*. There is no information available about his full name. Only the *Fihris* mentions about his commentary.⁶⁴
31. Khaṭībẓāde al-Rūmī Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm (d. 901/1495) was a Ḥanafī jurist, and scholastic theologian. His works are *Risāla fī ru'ya wa-al-kalām*, and a supercommentary on al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī's commentary of *al-Tajrīd*. He annotated *al-Tawḍīḥ* which deals with jurisprudence. He also wrote a supercommentary on al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī's commentary of *al-Kashshāf*.⁶⁵
32. Al-Dawānī, Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. As'ad al-Ṣiddiqī (d. 907/1501) studied with his father and the went to Shīrāz where he was a student of Muḥyī al-Dīn Gūsha Kinārī, Humām al-Dīn Gulbārī and Ṣafī al-Dīn 'Ījī. He was *qāḍī* and *mudarris* (teacher) of the Begum Madrasa, also known as the Dār al-Aytām. He wrote a gloss on various issues raised in *al-Kashshāf*. He also wrote commentaries on well-known works of philosophy and mystical literature and a number of dogmatic, mystic and philosophical treatises in Arabic.⁶⁶
33. Al-Qarmānī Kamāl al-Dīn Ismā'il (d. 920/1514) known as Qara Kamāl was exegete, jurist, and scholastic theologian. Most of his writings consist of glosses and commentaries. He annotated *al-Kashshāf*.⁶⁷
34. Al-Marzifūnī Khayr al-Dīn Khidr b. Mahmud b. 'Umar al-'Aṭūfī (d. 948/1541) was a great scholar in a variety of sciences. His writings include commentary of *Isāghūjī* on logic, commentary of *Mashāriq al-anwār al-nabawiyya min ṣiḥāḥ al-akhbār al-muṣṭafawiyya* of al-Ṣaghānī, entitled *Kashf al-mashāriq*

⁶² Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1479; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 3:213–14.

⁶³ Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 13:228; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:518.

⁶⁴ *Al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:518.

⁶⁵ Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1479; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 8:199; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:518.

⁶⁶ Zirikli, *A'lām*, 6:32–33; Ann K.S. Lambton, "al-Dawānī," *ET*, 2:173–74.

⁶⁷ Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1481; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 2:287; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:511.

- in three volumes, and commentary of *al-Burda* in praise of Prophet Muḥammad. He also composed a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁶⁸
35. Al-Shirāzī Ghayāth al-Dīn Manṣūr b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Ḥusaynī al-Dashtakī (d. 948/1541 or 949/1542) was a scholar. In addition to his commentary on *al-Kashshāf*, he wrote a refutation of *Unmūdhaj al-'ulūm* of Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. As'ad al-Dawānī.⁶⁹
 36. Al-Shirbīnī Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (d. 977/1570) known as al-Khaṭīb al-Shirbīnī was a Shāfi'ī jurist, commentator of the Qur'ān, theologian and grammarian. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁷⁰
 37. Zakariyyā' Afandī b. Bayrām (d. 1001/1592) was a Ḥanafī jurist, exegete, and scholar in some sciences. He annotated *al-Ghurar wa-al-durar* of Molla Khusrow. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁷¹
 38. Al-Mawṣili Khidr b. 'Aṭā' Allāh b. Muḥammad (d. 1007/1598) was a man of letters, scholar in grammar and lexicography and poetry. Ḥājji Khalifa mentions that his work on *al-Kashshāf* deals with *shawāhid*. Kaḥḥāla gives the full title as *al-Is'āf fī sharḥ shawāhid al-qāḍi wa-al-Kashshāf*. The title indicates that he wrote the commentary on Bayḍāwī's *Anwār al-tanzil wa-asrār al-ta'wīl* as well.⁷²
 39. Akhī zāda 'Abd al-Ḥalīm b. Muḥammad (d. 1013/1604–5) a Ḥanafī jurist was expert in several sciences. His works are *Riyāḍ al-sādāt fī ithbāt al-karāt lil-awliyā' ḥāl al-ḥayāt wa ba'd al-mamāt*, commentary on *al-Hidāya* of al-Marghiyānī on Ḥanafī jurisprudence, gloss on *al-Ishbāh wa-al-naẓā'ir* of Ibn Najīm and commentary on *al-Durar wa-al-ghurar*. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a *ḥāshiya* of al-Zamakhsharī's commentary on *awwal Sūra al-Anbiyā'*.⁷³
 40. Al-Maghribī Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. 'Īsā (d. 1016/1607) was Mālikī, exegete, and expert in several sciences. He composed a gloss on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Ghāyat al-ithāf fī-mā khafī min kalām al-qāḍi wa-al-Kashshāf*. According to Kaḥḥāla, he completed it in 1005/1597.⁷⁴

68 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1480; Zirikli, *al-A'lām*, 2:307; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 4:101–102; *Al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:519.

69 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 8:43; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:519.

70 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 8:269; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:519.

71 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 4:181–82; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2: 519.

72 Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-zunūn*, 2:1482; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 4: 101.

73 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 5: 97–98; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2: 520.

74 Kaḥḥāla gives three entries of Muḥammad b. al-Maghribī. In one entry, he mentions the year of his death 1005/1597 [*Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 9:22], whereas in the other two entries [*Mu'jam al-*

41. Muḥibb al-Dīn Afandī, Abū al-Faḍl Muḥammad b. Taqī al-Dīn (d. 1016/1608) was a Ḥanafī *muftī* in Damascus. He wrote a commentary on the *shawāhid* used by al-Zamakhsharī in *al-Kashshāf*, entitled: *Tanzīl al-āyāt ‘alā al-shawāhid min al-abyāt*.⁷⁵
42. Al-Ardabīlī Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Ghanī (d. 1036/1627) was exegete, jurist, and grammarian. Kaḥḥāla states that among his works are commentary on al-Baydāwī’s *tafsīr Anwār al-tanzīl*, *al-Anwār* which deals with al-Shāfi‘ī’s jurisprudence and commentary on al-Zamakhsharī’s *Unmudhaj*. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁷⁶
43. Al-Lārī Quṭb al-Dīn b. ‘Abd al-Ḥayyī al-Zāhidī al-Kabīrī al-Husaynī (fl. 1050/1640) wrote a gloss on *al-Kashshāf*.⁷⁷
44. Al-Anisī Šālīḥ b. Dāwūd (d. 1062/1652) was a Zaydī jurist and expert in several sciences. His works are a brief commentary on *al-‘Alfī lil-Jāmi‘ al-saghīr*, commentary on *al-‘Aqīda al-ṣaḥīḥa lil-Imam al-Muwakkal ‘alā Allāh* and commentary on *al-Masā’il al-Murtaḍā fī-ma ya’tamidu al-qaḍā*. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁷⁸
45. Al-Siyālkūtī ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm b. Shams al-Dīn (d. 1067/1657) was a Ḥanafī jurist, and versatile scholar. He wrote supercommentaries on several popular books. These supercommentaries include: *Tafsīr al-Baydāwī*, *al-‘Aqā’id al-Nasafiyya* of al-Taftāzānī, *al-Muṭawwal* of al-Taftāzānī, commentary of ‘Abd al-Ghafūr al-Lārī on *al-Fawā’id al-ḍiyā’iyya* which deals with grammar. The *Fihris* mentions that he wrote a commentary on *al-Kashshāf*.⁷⁹
46. Al-Yamanī Al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Jalāl (d. 1084/1673) was a scholar in several sciences. His works are commentary on *al-Fuṣūl* which deals with the principles of religious science, commentary on *al-Taḥdhīb* which relates to logic and *Fath al-alṭāf fī takmila al-kashf ‘alā al-Kashshāf*. The *Fihris* mentions that he composed a commentary entitled *al-Jalāl ‘alā al-Kashshāf*.⁸⁰

mu’allifin, 8:306] which appear on the same page, he mentions him twice, in one place he gives the same year of his death, i.e. 1005/1597 and in the second place the year of his death is 1016/1607. The *Fihris* gives his year of death 1016/1607. See Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 8:306 and 9:22; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:520.

75 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 3:16.

76 Al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍat al-jannāt*, 8:125; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 10:178; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:521.

77 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 2:660.

78 Ziriklī, *al-A’lām* 3:191; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 5:6; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:520.

79 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 5:95; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:520; Editor, “al-Siyālkūtī,” *El’*, 9:693.

80 Kaḥḥāla, *Mu’jam al-mu’allifin*, 3:202–203; *al-Fihris al-shāmil*, 2:521.

47. Al-Qūnawī Ḥāmid b. Muṣṭafā (d. 1098/1687) was a Ḥanafī *qāḍī al-jaysh* in Rumelia. He wrote a gloss on the commentary on *Sūra al-An'ām* in *al-Kashshāf* and al-Bayḍāwī's *Anwār al-tanzīl*, entitled: *Ḥāshiya 'alā tafsīr al-Sūra al-An'ām min al-Kashshāf li-l-Zamakhsharī wa-Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl li-l-Bayḍāwī*.⁸¹
48. Al-Maqbalī Ṣāliḥ b. Maḥdī b. 'Alī (d. 1108/1696) was a Zaydī scholar of exegesis, sciences of the Qur'ān and *ḥadīth*, Arabic lexicography, mysticism and jurisprudence. His writings consist of *al-'Ilm al-shāmikh fī ithār al-ḥaqq 'alā al-ābā'* wa-*al-mashā'ikh*, commentary on *Kitāb al-baḥr al-zukhkhār* entitled *al-Manār fī al-mukhtār min jawāhir al-baḥr al-zukhkhār* and commentary on *al-Kashshāf* entitled *al-Ithāf li-ṭalabat al-Kashshāf*.⁸²
49. Al-Dimashqī Ḥāmid b. 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. 'Abd al-Raḥīm al-'Imādī (d. 1171/1757) was a Ḥanafī scholar, jurist, *muftī*, and poet. He was author of many books including *al-Fatāwa al-'Imādiyya al-Ḥāmidiyya* entitled *Mughnī al-muftī 'an jawāb al-mustatfī* and *Ittiḥād al-qamarayn fī bayt al-raḡmatayn*. He composed a commentary of *al-Kashshāf* entitled *al-Ithāf fī sharḥ khuṭbat al-Kashshāf*.⁸³
50. Muḥammad Ṣiddīq Khān b. Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Luṭf Allāh (d. 1307/1890) was a scholar of Qur'ānic exegesis, *ḥadīth* and lexicography who wrote in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. His main works written in Arabic are *Fatḥ al-bayān fī ma-qāṣid al-Qur'ān – tafsīr* of the Qur'ān in ten volumes, *'Awn al-bārī* which deals with traditions and a summary of *al-Kashshāf* entitled *Khulāṣa al-Kashshāf*.⁸⁴

6 Scholars' Opinions about *al-Kashshāf*

As mentioned above, *al-Kashshāf* has been widely read and subject to numerous commentaries since it was published. Some scholars criticized its Mu'tazilite contents and wrote against it. Others commented upon its lexicographical, grammatical, and eloquent style and praised it. However, some scholars expressed their views in a cautious manner that one should read it but be aware of its intrigues.

⁸¹ Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 1:523; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:521.

⁸² Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 5:14; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:512.

⁸³ Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 3:180; *al-Fihris al-shāmīl*, 2:526.

⁸⁴ Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 7:36–37; Zafarul-Islām Khān, "Nawwab Sayyid Siddik Hasan Khan," *ET*, 7:1048.

Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Jamāra al-Andalusī (d. 699/1300) states that *al-Kashshāf* is an exquisite and sublime commentary of the Qur’ān. The reader of this book falls in one of the two categories: either he is an expert in his knowledge or he does not have sufficient qualifications to comprehend it. If someone is expert and knowledgeable of the intrigues (i.e., Mu’tazilite doctrines and their views) which have been inserted in the *tafsīr*, then it will not be harmful and one can find those machinations. It may be beneficial because of its refined and eloquent use of Arabic language, logical interpretation, and things similar to that. However, if a person is not knowledgeable, then it is not permissible for him to look into it because he may slip into intrigues without realizing it.⁸⁵

According to Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), the Mu’tazilites initially form some ideas and then interpret the Qur’ān to suit their purpose. Their interpretation of the Qur’ān can be disproved by demonstrating that their views are erroneous in two ways: either by refuting the arguments which they advance or by defending the positions which they attack. Some of them have an elegant, lucid and eloquent style of writing and introduce their erroneous beliefs so clandestinely that many readers fail to perceive them. The author of *al-Kashshāf*, for instance, has succeeded in making his commentary so attractive to a great number of people that they would hardly look for his erroneous views in it. In fact, some scholars approvingly quote passages from his *tafsīr* in their writings without realizing that they contain ideas derived from the Mu’tazilite principles.⁸⁶

Abū al-Fidā’ (d. 732/1331) and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) mention that al-Zamakhsharī professed Mu’tazilism openly, and *al-Kashshāf*’s explicit theme is Mu’tazilite theology.⁸⁷

Abū Ḥayyān is of the opinion that al-Zamakhsharī is amply endowed with the Qur’ānic knowledge and combines in his commentary innovative meanings of the words, proficiency and eloquent style. In his book there are praiseworthy as well as intriguing things. He has written down his evaluation in the form of poetry in which he praises the book and mentions its merits from which a person can benefit. However, he cautions about those things which are impertinent in it and should be avoided.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. Abī Jamra al-Andalusī, *Bahjat al-nufūs wa-taḥalliha bi-ma’rifat mā lahā wa-‘alayhā*, ed. Bakrī Shaykh Amīn (Beirut: Dār al-‘Ilm lil-Malā’iyyīn, 1997), 1:65–66.

⁸⁶ Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm Ibn Taymiyya, *Muqaddima fī usūl al-tafsīr*, ed. ‘Adnān Zarzūr (Beirut: Mu’assasat al-Risāla, 1972), 85–86.

⁸⁷ Abū al-Fidā’, *Kitāb al-Mukhtaṣar*, 3:25; Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya*, 12:219.

⁸⁸ Muḥammad b. Yūsuf Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, *Tafsīr al-Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, ed. ‘Ādil Aḥmad ‘Abd al-Mawjūd and ‘Alī Muḥammad Mu’awwiḍ (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1993), 7:81.

Al-Dhahabī is very critical in his assessment about al-Zamakhsharī. He mentions in *al-'Ibar*, that al-Zamakhsharī was a scholar of great qualities and used to propagate for Mu'tazilism. In *Tā'rikh al-Islam*, he states that he expressed openly his Mu'tazilite creed and called others to innovation. He repeats in *Siyar*, that al-Zamakhsharī used to propagate Mu'tazilism. May God have mercy on him. Finally, in *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, after mentioning that he propagates Mu'tazilism openly, al-Dhahabī states that God may protect people and warns that one should be cautious when reading *al-Kashshāf*.⁸⁹

Shams al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī (d. 749/1348) states in his commentary entitled *al-Jāmi' baynā al-tafsīr al-kabīr wa al-Kashshāf*, that he perused *al-Kashshāf* and found that whatever has been written by al-Zamakhsharī, he took it from al-Zajjāj (d. 311/923).⁹⁰

In al-Subkī's (d. 771/1370) view *al-Kashshāf* is a great book in the field of exegesis and its author is a great scholar except that he is a heretic. It is, therefore, necessary that whatever is written in *al-Kashshāf* should be erased.⁹¹

According to 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad Ibn Khaldūn, there are two types of Qur'ānic interpretations. The first type is traditional, based upon information received from the early Muslims. The second type is based upon the linguistic knowledge, such as lexicography and eloquence (*balāgha*) used for conveying meaning through rational means and methods. The second type of commentary is best represented by al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*, who is a Mu'tazilite in his dogmatic views. He uses the various methods of rhetoric, arguing in favor of the pernicious doctrines of the Mu'tazila, wherever he believed they occurred in the verses of the Qur'ān. Competent orthodox scholars have, therefore, come to disregard this work and warn everyone against its pitfalls. However, they admit that he is on solid ground relating to language and eloquence. If the reader is well-versed with the orthodox dogmas and knows the arguments in their defense, he is undoubtedly safe from its fallacies. Therefore, he should take

⁸⁹ Al-Dhahabī, *al-'Ibar*, 4:106; al-Dhahabī, *Tā'rikh al-Islam*, 36:489; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:156; Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl fī naqd al-rijāl*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bajawī (Cairo: Matba'at 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1963), 4:78.

⁹⁰ Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. al-Sarī al-Zajjāj was an Arabic grammarian and an authority in the history of grammatical tradition. Among his writings are a number of lexicographical treatises. His main work *Ma'ānī al-Qur'ān* deals with Qur'ānic philology. His opinions are quoted frequently by al-Rāzī in his Qur'ān commentary. See C.H.M. Versteegh, "al-Zadjdjadj, Abū Ishāq, Ibrāhīm b. al-Sarī," *El²*, 11:377–78; Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1482.

⁹¹ Tāj al-Dīn 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Subkī, *Mu'īd al-ni'am wa-mubīd al-naqam*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī al-Najjār and Abū Zayd Shelbī (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kānjī, 1993), 80.

the advantage of studying it, because of its remarkable and varied linguistic information.⁹²

Burhān al-Dīn Ḥaydar b. Muḥammad al-Ḥawāfī al-Harawī (d. 830/1426) states that *al-Kashshāf* is of exquisite quality which he did not see similar to it among the works of earlier writers, and one will not find anything like it among the writings of the latter. It has precise and proficient wordings, elegant composition, and meticulous stylistic peculiarity. It does not fall short of any standards when someone examines the principles of exegesis, refinement of demonstrations and proofs, methodology, and reconstruction of points for synthesis. However, if one draws analogous conclusions from it, then one finds that its author's Mu'tazilite views are interwoven and the interpretation falls down into errors culminating into perilous mistakes. As a consequence, one finds the *tafsīr* altered from its real meaning and it is a great misfortune and immense calamity.⁹³

According to Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, people who are enthusiastic about reading *al-Kashshāf* should be very careful. If they are thoroughly familiar and well-versed with the traditions (*sunna*) and read it with extreme care they can benefit from the commentary provided they safeguard against its intrigues and secret machinations.⁹⁴

Al-Suyūṭī considers that al-Zamakhsharī was a scholar of enormous insight in the science of eloquence and praises him generously as an authority (*sulṭān*) in this field. He elucidated and proved the inimitability of the Qur'ān in *al-Kashshāf* with such convincing arguments that his book became famous in the farthest parts of the world from East to West.⁹⁵

7 Conclusion

Al-Kashshāf is the *magnum opus* of al-Zamakhsharī in which he explains the grammatical, lexicographical, and rhetorical features, variant readings and the

⁹² 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1996), 407–8.

⁹³ Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1482–83; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifin*, 4:92; Ismā'il Pāshā al-Baghdādī, *Hadiyyat al-'arīfin : asmā' al-mu'allifin wa-athār al-muṣannifin*, (Istanbul: Wikālat al-Ma'ārif, 1951–1955), 1:341–42; 'Ādil Nuwayhid, *Mu'jam al-mufasssirin: min ṣadr al-Islām ḥattā al-'aṣr al-ḥādir* (Beirut: Mu'assasat Nuwayhid al-Thaqāfiyya, 1983), 1:165.

⁹⁴ Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 7:63–64.

⁹⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:30; al-Zamakhsharī, *Dīwān*, 596; Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1476.

miraculous nature (*i'jāz*) of the Qur'ān. The primary sources do not provide much information about the transmission of *al-Kashshāf* after its completion. *Al-Fihris al-shāmil* mentions 843 manuscripts of *al-Kashshāf*, out of which 443 manuscripts bear the date or century in which they were copied. They are available in various libraries and museums of the world. The earliest manuscript was copied only four years after al-Zamakhsharī's death and fourteen years after he had finished the commentary in Mecca. The most recent manuscript given in *al-Fihris* is in Riyāḍ which is dated 1301/1882. This indicates that there never was a time when somebody somewhere was not copying al-Zamakhsharī's *tafsīr*.

Since its inception, *al-Kashshāf* has been subject to orthodox Sunnī criticism which centered on the basic principles of Mu'tazilite theology, while others commented upon its lexicographical, grammatical, and eloquent style and praised it. In fact, no other book in the history of *tafsīr* has been commented upon in the forms of *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars* more than *al-Kashshāf*. Hājjī Khalīfa in his *Kashf al-zūnūn* lists approximately fifty commentaries. *Al-Fihris al-shāmil* mentions seventy-three *sharḥs*, *ḥāshiyas*, and *mukhtaṣars*.

Chapter 3 Al-Zamakhsharī's Methodology of *Tafsīr*

1 *Tafsīr* and *Ta'wīl*

Muṣṭafā b. 'Abd Allāh Kātib al-Chelbī also known as Ḥājji Khalifa (d. 1067/1628), the eleventh/seventeenth century historian, bibliographer and geographer, in his outstanding compendium entitled *Kashf al-ẓunūn 'an asāmī al-kutub wa-al-funūn* says that *tafsīr* is “the noblest of sciences, and the greatest of them” (*ashraf al-'ulūm wa-a'ẓamu-hā*), and it is the first and foremost of the sciences (*ra's al-'ulūm wa-ra'i'su-hā*).¹

Tafsīr is one of the most important disciplines of the Qur'ānic sciences (*'ulūm al-Qur'ān*), and is mentioned only once in the Qur'ān as a commentary of it: “They do not bring you any simile but We bring you the truth and the best explanation,” (*walā ya'tūnaka bi-mithlin illā ji'nāka bi-al-ḥaqq wa aḥsana tafsīran*).²

Tafsīr signifies discovering, detecting, revealing, and developing what is meant by a dubious expression.³ The Muslim sources describe *tafsīr* as an Arabic word which deals with the interpretation, explanation, and elucidation of Qur'ānic verses. However, Gilliot is of the opinion that, “Although *tafsīr* with no other qualification refers in most cases to a Qur'ānic interpretation or commentary, its origin is not Arabic. The verb *fassara*, ‘to discover something hidden,’ is a borrowing from Aramaic, Syriac, or Christian-Palestinian (*peshar*, *pashshar*).”⁴ According to Fraenkel, *fassara* is a borrowing from the Syriac, ‘to expound, make clear,’ which is very commonly used in early Syriac texts in the sense of interpre-

1 *Kashf al-ẓunūn* is one of the greatest bibliographical dictionaries in Arabic. The introduction deals with the importance of learning and the classification of the various branches of knowledge; the main text lists some 14,500 titles in alphabetical order, with some commentary. Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 1:427, 434.

2 Qur'ān, 25:33.

3 Edward William Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, ed. Stanley Lane-Poole (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1955), 6:2397; Abū al-Faḍl Jamāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Mukarram Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab* (Beirut: Dār Sādir, 1955–56), 5:55; Syed Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Murtaḍa al-Zabīdī, *Tāj al-'Arūs min jawāhir al-qāmūs*, ed. Ḥusayn Naṣṣār (Kuwait: Maṭba'at Ḥukumat al-Kuwayt, 1965–2001), 13:323–24; Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Firūzābādī, *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīṭ* (Beirut: Mu'assassa al-'Arabiya li-al-Ṭibā'a wa-al-Nashr, 1970), 2:110; 'Abd al-Ra'ūf b. Tāj al-'Arifin al-Munāwī, *al-Tawqīf 'alā muhimāt al-ta'arīf*, ed. 'Abd al-Ḥamid Ṣāliḥ Hamdān (Cairo: 'Ālam al-Kitāb, 1990), 104, 260.

4 Claude Gilliot, “Exegesis of the Qur'ān: Classical and Medieval,” *EQ*, 2:99–124.

tation of scripture. In the Aramaic, it means 'to solve, to interpret.' The Arabic *fassara* is doubtless of the same origin, and *tafassara* and *tafsīr* were later formed from this borrowed verb.⁵

Rippin considers that *tafsīr* is an Arabic word meaning 'interpretation;' it is, more specifically, the general term used in reference to all genres of literature which are commentaries upon the Qur'ān.⁶ He states that although the word *tafsīr* is historically related to the exegesis of the Qur'ān, it is also used by Muslim scholars for commentaries on Greek scientific and philosophical works, being equivalent to *sharḥ*, 'explanation and explication.'⁷

Al-Suyūṭī mentions that according to Badr al-al-Dīn Muḥammad al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392),

Tafsīr is a knowledge through which the book of God that was revealed to His Prophet Muḥammad may be comprehended in its meanings, its law and wisdom. This knowledge is derived from philology (*ilm al-lughā*), grammar (*naḥw*), morphology (*taṣrīf*), metaphorical and rhetorical sciences (*ilm al-bayān*), principles of jurisprudence (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), various modes of Qur'ānic readings (*qirā'āt*), occasions of revelation (*asbāb al-nuzūl*) and the familiarity with the abrogative and the abrogated verses (*al-nāsikh wa al-mansūkh*).⁸

He elaborates that *tafsīr* includes the circumstances of the revelation of a verse, chapter or story and its historical context. It provides the chronology of the text whether it was revealed in Mecca or Medina. In addition, it determines whether a verse is *muḥkam* (perspicuous) or *mutashābih* (ambiguous) and whether it has a general or specific reference to the text.⁹

Ta'wīl signifies the discovering, detecting, revealing, expounding, or interpreting to which a thing is or may be reduced or that which it comes or may come to be. *Ta'wīl*, the verbal noun of the form II verb *awwala* is derived either from *awl* 'going back to the origin, returning to the beginning,' or *ma'āl* 'end, outcome, consequence' or *iyālā* 'putting into right condition, managing properly.'

5 See Siegmund Frankel, *Die Aramäischen Fremdwörter im Arabischen* (Leiden: Brill, 1886), 286; Arthur Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'ān* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1938), 92.

6 A. Rippin, "Tafsīr," *ER*, 14:236–44.

7 A. Rippin, "Tafsīr," *EF*², 10:83.

8 Jalāl al-Dīn 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Abī Bakr al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Fawwāz Aḥmad Zamarli (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 2012), 849.

9 Badr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān fī 'ulūm al-Qur'ān*, ed. Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Cairo: Dār Iḥyā al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya, 1957), 2:148.

Therefore, *ta'wīl* means 'explanation, clarification, discovery' and is synonymous with *tafsīr*.¹⁰

The word *ta'wīl* occurs seventeen times in the Qur'ān signifying different meanings. In verse 3:7, it is mentioned twice and used in the context of interpretation of verses: "As to those in whose hearts there is doubt, they pursue what is allegorical in it seeking dissention and giving its interpretation. However, no one except God knows its interpretation," (*fa amma alladhīna fī qulūbihim zayghun fa yattabi'ūna mā tashābaha minhu ibtighā'a al-fitnati wa ibtighā'a ta'wīlihi*). In verses 12:36, 37, 44, 45, and 100, it implies explanation or interpretation of a dream (*ta'wīl al-aḥlām* and *ta'wīl ru'yā*). In verses 12:6, 21, 101; 18:78, and 82, it means explanation or interpretation of an event (*ta'wīl al-aḥādīth*). In verses 7:53 (twice) and 10:39, it is used to denote the occurrence of a forewarned future event: "Are they looking for anything but its interpretation? On the Day (of resurrection) will come its interpretation" (*hal yanẓurūna illā ta'wīlahu yawma ya'tī ta'wīluhu*); and "And whose interpretation (in events) has not yet come to them" (*wa lammā ya'tihim ta'wīluhu*) respectively. However, in verses 4:59 and 17:35, it indicates the end, result, or final consequence of a thing: "That is the best and excellent (in respect of) consequence" (*dhālika khayrun wa aḥsanu ta'wīla*).¹¹

In the first two Islamic centuries, there was no differentiation between *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*, when used as a technical term for the works of exegesis. At the beginning of the third Islamic century, there arose differences of opinions among the lexicographers and philologists about the precise meaning of these terms and their relationship to each other. Some scholars considered that *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* were synonymous and have the same meanings, and early commentators used these terms interchangeably. For instance, Mujāhid b. Jabr (d. 104/722), Abū Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) and Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Māturidī (d. 333/944) used the term *ta'wīl* in the titles of their Qur'ānic commentaries: *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'ān* and *Ta'wīlāt al-Qur'ān* respectively. Even much later, the commentaries of 'Abd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd Abū al-Barakāt al-Nasafī (d. 710/1310), Nāṣir al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar al-Bayḍāwī and 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī b. Muḥammad b. Ibrāhīm al-Khāzin (d. 745/1344) are entitled *Madārik al-tanzīl wa-ḥaqā'iq al-ta'wīl*, and *Anwār al-tanzīl wa-asrār al-ta'wīl* and *Lubāb al-ta'wīl fī ma'ānī al-tanzīl* respectively. Similarly, Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī considers that both terms – *ta'wīl* and *tafsīr* – refer to exegesis and are equivalent and *ta'wīl* in fact is

¹⁰ Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 1:126; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 11:33–34; al-Munāwī, *Tawqīf*, 89–90; al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, 2:148–49; Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *Asās al-balāgha* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1979), 25.

¹¹ Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 1:127; I. Poonawala, "Ta'wīl," *EF*², 10:390.

tafsīr. He elaborates that these terms give the meaning of a text. *Tafsīr* or *ta'wīl* is an effort to understand the meaning of a statement by referring back to the text. To arrive at this definition, he considers the etymology of the term *ta'wīl* which is rooted in the verb *āl* (to return). Therefore, “*ta'wīl* is both the source and ultimate return of something” (*wa al-ta'wīl marja' al-shay' wa maṣīruhu*).¹²

Other exegetes consider that *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* are two different terms and differ in their meanings. Abū al-Qāsim b. Ḥabīb al-Naysābūrī (d. 406/1015–16) notes that those who claim to be exegetes, cannot even differentiate between *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*. *Tafsīr* is associated with narration, tradition, and text (*riwāya*), while *ta'wīl* is associated with understanding and interpretation (*dirāya*). Another distinction between *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* is that *tafsīr* is the explanation (*bayān*) of a word with one interpretation, while *ta'wīl* takes into account multiple meanings and aspects of a word.¹³ The early exegete Muqātil b. Sulaymān (d. 150/767) makes a distinction between *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*. For him, *tafsīr* refers to what is known on the human level and *ta'wīl* as what is known to God alone.¹⁴ Al-Māturidī differentiates between *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*, and according to him *tafsīr* belongs to the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad because they witnessed the events and knew the circumstances of the revelation of the Qur'ān, whereas *ta'wīl* is the domain of the scholars.¹⁵

Abū Ishāq Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Tha'labī (d. 427/1035) states that,

The function of *tafsīr* ... is the unveiling (*al-kashf*) of the subject matter of the verse, its story, its meaning, and the reasons behind its revelation. *Ta'wīl*, on the other hand, is the rendering of the meaning of the verse (*ṣarf al-āyah*) into a different meaning that it might entertain (*ma'nā yaḥtamiluh*) which is consistent with what comes before and after it.¹⁶

Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Rāghib al-Iṣfahānī (d. prob. 502/1109) considers that *tafsīr* deals with general explanation, whereas *ta'wīl* is concerned with specific meanings, and compared to *ta'wīl*, *tafsīr* is understood easily. Furthermore, *tafsīr* is used for both God's scriptures and human beings' books, while *ta'wīl*

12 Fakhr al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr aw Mafātiḥ al-ghayb*, ed. 'Abd al-Rahmān Muḥammad (Cairo: al-Maṭba'at al-Bahīyya al-Miṣriyya, 1934–62), 14:95.

13 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān fī*, 848–49.

14 Rippin, “Tafsīr,” *ER*, 14:236–44.

15 Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Māturidī, *Ta'wīlāt al-Qur'ān*, ed. Aḥmad Vanlioğlu and Bekir Topaloğlu (Istanbul: Dār al-Mizān, 2005), 3.

16 Walid A. Saleh, *The Formation of the Classical Tafsīr Tradition: The Qur'ān Commentary of al-Tha'labī* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2004), 92.

is used specifically only for God's scriptures.¹⁷ Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn al-Baghawī (d. 516/1122) and Aḥmad b. Yūsuf Muwaffaq al-Dīn al-Kawāshī (d. 680/1281) are of the same opinion that *ta'wīl* is the rendering of the meaning of the verse through inference (*istinbāṭ*) which is consistent with the earlier and later verses and is not contrary to the Qur'ān and *sunna*.¹⁸ Muḥyī' al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 638/1240) considers that every verse of the Qur'ān has exoteric and esoteric meanings. *Tafsīr* signifies the uncovering of exoteric meanings and *ta'wīl* is the esoteric meanings of the Qur'ān.¹⁹

2 *Tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* and *Tafsīr bi-al-ra'y*

Tafsīr is divided into two broad categories: *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* and *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y*. *Tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* is exegesis that relies on those Prophetic traditions which are trustworthy in their transmission (*isnād*) and text (*matn*), which is considered by the mainstream Sunnī exegetes to be authentic and reliable.²⁰ *Tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* is exegesis that is based on personal opinion and rational analysis of the text.²¹

While the traditionists consider rationalist commentary to be opinion-based whimsical, and capricious, the rationalists do not find the traditions a reliable source for Qur'ānic interpretation. However, there are no clear-cut boundaries between these two types of commentaries. Historically, both traditionists and rationalists have used traditions as well as their own opinions in their exegesis. According to R. Marston Speight, "the polarity between *tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* and *tafsīr bi-al-ra'y* was often accentuated by polemics in disciplines other than scriptural exegesis alone, that is, in legal theory, philosophy, theology, and political theory. Practically speaking, even that great monument to *ma'thūr* inter-

17 Al-Zarkashī, *al-Burhān*, 2:149.

18 Al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, 843.

19 Muḥyī' al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-'Arabī, *Tafsīr Qur'ān al-karīm* (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa al-'Arabiyya, 1968), 1:4.

20 Al-Wāḥidī gives an elaborate definition of *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr*. See Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Wāḥidī, *al-Wasīṭ fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-majīd*, ed. 'Ādil Aḥmad 'Abd al-Mawjūd, 'Alī Muḥammad Mu'awwiḍ, Aḥmad Muḥammad Šira and Aḥmad 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Jamāl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya, 1994), 7–16.

21 Rashid Ahmad, "Qur'ānic Exegesis and Classical Tafsīr," *The Islamic Quarterly* 12 (1968), 81–87.

pretation which is the commentary of al-Ṭabarī contains much that can be labeled as *tafsīr bi-al-ra'y*.”²²

3 Al-Zamakhsharī's Methodology of *Tafsīr*

There is a general consensus among the traditional Muslim scholars and the Western scholars that the *tafsīr* genre in written form emerged at least in the early second/eighth century, and constituted one of the most important disciplines of the sciences of the Qur'ān (*'ulūm al-Qur'ān*) approximately from the third/ninth century.²³

Andrew Rippin states that,

In most cases, a work entitled *Tafsīr* will follow the text of the Qur'ān from the beginning to the end, and will provide an interpretation (*tafsīr*) of segments of the text (word-by-word, phrase-by-phrase, or verse-by-verse) as a running commentary.²⁴

Most of the verses are interpreted by the other verses of the Qur'ān, traditions of the Prophet, and grammar. Other elements in the interpretation include “occasions of the revelation” (*asbāb al-nuzūl*), “abrogating and the abrogated” (*al-nāsikh wa-l-mansūkh*), “variant readings” (*qirā'āt*), and historical context, which are not necessarily present at the same time in one and the same exegete, but which are not mutually exclusive.

According to Feras Hamza and Sajjad Rizvi,

There has been a remarkable continuity of form and method in the production of *tafsīr* works since the beginnings of the exegetical enterprise. Such continuity, however, has

²² R. Marston Speight, “The Function of *ḥadīth* as Commentary on the Qur'ān, as Seen in the Six Authoritative Collections,” in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 68.

²³ The excellent introductions to the genre of *tafsīr*, its emergence, development, and disciplines of Qur'ānic sciences can be found in the following: Gilliot, “Exegesis of the Qur'ān: Classical and Medieval,” *EQ*, 2:99–124; Claude Gilliot, “Beginnings of Qur'ānic Exegesis,” in *The Qur'ān: Formative Interpretation*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Aldershot, Hampshire; Brookfield, Vt: Ashgate, 1999), 1–27; Rippin, Andrew, “Tafsīr,” *EI*², 10:83–88; Rippin, Andrew, “Tafsīr,” *ER*, 14:236–44; G.R. Hawting and A.K.A. Shareef, ed. *Approaches to the Qur'ān* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Colin Turner, ed. *The Qur'ān: Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies* (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2004).

²⁴ Rippin, Andrew, “Tafsīr,” *EI*², 10:83–88.

not meant a uniformity of opinions; varied hermeneutical approaches and interpretations have always found a place within a shared reverence for the divine text.²⁵

Despite the fact that al-Zamakhsharī's *tafsīr al-Kashshāf* follows the text of the Qur'ān from the beginning to the end, his exegetical techniques differ from the standard format of traditional exegesis. The main characteristics of his *tafsīr* are: emphasis on the *muḥkam* and *mutashābih* verses, significance of 'ilm al-ma'ānī and 'ilm al-bayān, question and answer format (*as'ila wa-ajwiba*), and extensive grammatical use. These components of exegesis are uniquely applied by him throughout the *Kashshāf*, which will be illustrated in the following pages.

In addition to the above mentioned techniques, al-Zamakhsharī used some of the elements of a traditional Qur'ān commentary, such as "interpretation of the Qur'ān by means of the Qur'ān" (*tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi-al-Qur'ān*), use of the *aḥādīth*, and the variant readings of the Qur'ān (*qirā'āt*).²⁶

25 Feras Hamza, Sajjad Rizvi and Farhana Mayer, ed. *An Anthology of Qur'ānic Commentaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 1:1.

26 According to Suleiman Mourad, the Mu'tazilites composed books on Qur'ānic exegesis, but most of them are not extant, except that of al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*, al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī's (d. 494/1101) *al-Tahdhīb fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, and Abū 'Isā al-Rummānī's (d. 384/994) *al-Jāmi' al-kabīr*. Al-Jishumī's hermeneutical system comprises of: reading (*al-qirā'a*), philology (*al-lughā*), grammatical syntax (*al-i'rāb*), structural composition (*al-naẓm*), meaning (*al-ma'nā*), occasion of revelation (*al-nuzūl*), evidences and decrees (*al-adilla wa-l-aḥkām*), and messages and stories (*al-akhbār wa-l-qīṣaṣ*). Al-Rummānī's hermeneutical system comprises of: meaning (*al-fahm*), reading (*wujūh al-qirā'āt*), grammatical syntax (*al-i'rāb*), evidences (*al-dalālat*), and decrees (*al-aḥkām*). See Suleiman A. Mourad, "The Revealed Text and the Intended Subtext: Notes on the Hermeneutics of the Qur'ān in Mu'tazila Discourse as reflected in the Tahdhīb of al-Ḥākim al-Ġišumī (d. 494/1101)," in *Tafsīr: Interpreting the Qur'ān – Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. Mustafa Shah (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 2:367; Suleiman A. Mourad, "The Survival of the Mu'tazila Tradition of Qur'ānic Exegesis in Shī'ī and Sunni Tafāsīr," in *Tafsīr: Interpreting the Qur'ān – Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. Mustafa Shah (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 3:241; Suleiman A. Mourad, "The Mu'tazila and their Tafsīr Tradition: A Comparative Study of Five Exegetical Glosses on Qur'ān 3.178," in *Tafsīr: Interpreting the Qur'ān – Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. Mustafa Shah (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 3:267; Suleiman A. Mourad, "Towards a Reconstruction of the Mu'tazilī Tradition of Qur'ānic Exegesis: Reading the Introduction to the *Tahdhīb* of al-Ḥākim al-Jishumī (d. 494/1101) and its Application," in *Aims, Methods and Contexts of Qur'ānic Exegesis (2nd/8th – 9th/15th c.)*, ed. Karen Bauer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 105.

3.1 *Muḥkamāt wa mutashābihāt*

Al-Zamakhsharī's starting point for exegesis is generally based on the following verse:²⁷

It is He who has sent down upon you the book wherein are 'perspicuous verses' (*āyātun muḥkamātun*) and which are the 'mother of the Book' (*umm al-kitāb*), and others are 'ambiguous' (*mutashābihātun*). As for those 'in whose hearts is swerving' (*fī qulūbihim zayghun*), they follow what is ambiguous in it, seeking (to create) dissension and seeking its interpretation. However, no one except God knows its interpretation. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: 'We believe in it, all is from our Lord (*āmannā bihi kullun min 'indī rabbīnā*),' but only those who have wisdom understand.

Al-Zamakhsharī illustrates his interpretation of the word *muḥkamāt* on a lexical approach and interprets the word *muḥkamāt* (the *ism al-maf'ūl* of *aḥkama*) as *ḥuḍḍat min al-iḥtimāl wa-al-ishtibāh* (the verses that are preserved from speculation and doubt).²⁸ He states that the issue of the *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* is not only important but also the very foundation of the Qur'ānic interpretation. He maintains that no exegesis is possible without a complete understanding of the *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt* verses. According to him, 'perspicuous verses' (*āyātun muḥkamāt*) are those whose expression ('*ibāra*) is clear (*uḥkimat*) because they have been preserved (*ḥuḍḍat*) and are free from speculation (*iḥtimāl*) and doubt (*ishtibāh*).²⁹ He interprets 'clear verses' (*uḥkimat āyātuhu*) as "verses arranged firmly and perfectly in which there is neither contradiction nor imperfection" (*nuzūmat nazman raṣinan muḥkaman lā yaqa'u fihā naqḍ wa-lā khalāl*)³⁰ as mentioned in the verse "Alif lām rā', A book whose verses are set clear and made distinct" (*alif lām rā kitābun uḥkimat āyātuhu thumma fuṣṣilat*).³¹ The clarity of *muḥkam* verses can be found in their own wordings. They do not require any explanation from extraneous sources, such as other verses of the Qur'ān, Prophetic traditions or linguistic investigation in order to understand them. In addition, they are the "essence of the Book" (*umm al-kitāb*) since "they serve as a

²⁷ Qur'ān, 3:7.

²⁸ Ibn Manẓūr glosses the word *aḥkama shay'an* (a verbal use of the root *muḥkam*) as *amna'ahu min al-fasād* (to protect it from imperfection). See Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 12:143.

²⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:527–9.

³⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:181.

³¹ Qur'ān, 11:1.

basis for interpreting *mutashābih* verses and are referred back to the perspicuous verses" (*tuḥmal al-mutashābihāt 'alayhā wa-turadda ilayhā*).³²

Al-Zamakhsharī states that the Qur'ān in its entirety is not *muḥkam*. Had it been completely 'perspicuous' (*muḥkam*) the people would have been attached to easiness and convenience in their approach to the Qur'ān and turned away from investigation and perception of reasoning. In this case, they would have lost their way and could not achieve the gnosis and belief in the unity of God. There is a test and trial, and a distinction has to be made between a verse firmly established with truth and a wavering 'ambiguous' (*mutashābih*) verses.³³ It is for this reason that the scholars need to investigate and consider the meaning with scrutiny and reasoning and exert great talent in deriving the exposition of an 'ambiguous' (*mutashābih*) verse by referring it to a 'perspicuous' (*muḥkam*) verse. If one is successful, it results in great rewards and the attainment of higher ranks from God. It is a believer's conviction that the word of God is neither inconsistent nor contradictory. When he observes some apparent incompatibility in it, he endeavors to find conformity and harmony and adopts the customary practice sanctioned by the traditions. Due to his reflection, God helps him in his thoughts and clarifies the 'ambiguous' (*mutashābih*) verses in accordance with the 'perspicuous' (*muḥkam*) verses. It increases peace of mind in his belief and strengthens his conviction.³⁴

Al-Zamakhsharī cites two examples explaining how a 'perspicuous' (*muḥkam*) verse can provide the basis for interpreting an 'ambiguous' (*mutashābih*) verse. He considers that "Looking upon their Lord" (*ilā rabbihā nāẓiratun*)³⁵ is an 'ambiguous' (*mutashābih*) verse which can be interpreted by a 'perspicuous' (*muḥkam*) verse: "Vision cannot attain Him," (*lā tudrikuhu al-abṣār*).³⁶ Similarly, "We command its people (living a life of) luxury" (*amarnā mutrafihā*)³⁷ is an 'am-

32 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:528. Al-Zamakhsharī also mentions in his *al-Minhāj fī uṣūl al-dīn* that, "the ambiguous passages are interpreted by referring to the clear ones" (*al-mutashābih rāji' ilā al-muḥkam*). See Schmidkte, *Mu'tazilite Creed of az-Zamaḥsharī*, 44, 82. According to Goldziher, al-Zamakhsharī considered the clear verses of the Qur'ān, *the umm al-kitāb*, "the root to which the ambiguous is traced back and where it finds its explanation." See Ignaz Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranlegung* (Leiden: Brill, 1952), 127–28.

33 Leah Kinberg, "Muḥkamāt and Mutashābihāt (Koran 3/7): Implication of a Koranic Pair of Terms in Medieval Exegesis," *Arabica* 35 (1988): 143–72; Michel Lagarde, "De l'Ambiguïté (*mutashābih*) dans le Coran: tentatives d'explication des exégètes musulmans," *Quaderni di studi arabi* 3 (1985): 45–62.

34 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:527–28.

35 Qur'ān, 75:23.

36 Qur'ān, 6:103.

37 Qur'ān, 17:16.

biguous' (*mutashābih*) verse which can be interpreted by "God does not command indecency" (*inna Allāh lā yā'muru bi al-faḥshā'i*)³⁸ which is a 'perspicuous' (*muḥkam*) verse.

Al-Zamakhsharī does not define the meaning of 'ambiguous' (*mutashābihāt*) as comprehensively as he does the meaning of 'perspicuous' (*muḥkamāt*). He simply glosses *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous) as a combination of *mushtabihāt* (suspicious) and *muḥtamilāt* (probable). However, according to Ibn Manẓūr and Ibn Qutayba *mutashābihāt* (ambiguous) is synonymous with *mushkilāt* (difficult or obscure) words.³⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī further states that as for those whose hearts are swerving, they follow what is 'ambiguous' (*mutashābih*) in it and do not conform to the 'perspicuous' (*muḥkam*). He also mentions that the interpretation of these verses "does not correspond with the statements of the people of the truth" (*ma yuṭābiqah min qawl ahl al-ḥaqq*).⁴⁰ Thus, the non-Mu'tazilites interpret these verses according to their desires and turn away the people from their religion and mislead them.⁴¹

This verse⁴² can be interpreted in two different ways. In the first case, *wāw* is read as a conjunctive particle (*wāw al-'atf*) that links the words *Allāh* and *al-rāsikhūna fī al-'ilmi*. Therefore, the verse will be interpreted that not only God knows its interpretation, but also those who are firmly grounded in knowledge, who say: "We believe in it, all is from our Lord." In the second case, *wāw* is not a conjunctive particle (*wāw al-'atf*), rather it is read as *wāw al-isti'nāf*, indicating the beginning of the verse. Therefore, the verse will be interpreted that no one except God knows its interpretation. And those who are firmly grounded in knowledge say: "We believe in it, all is from our Lord." Al-Zamakhsharī's interpretation is based upon his reading of *wāw* in the verse as a conjunctive particle. According to him, the interpretation of these verses is known not only to God, but also to those people who have sound knowledge, i.e. firmly established and deep rooted.⁴³

38 Qur'ān, 7:28.

39 Abū Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh b. Muslim al-Dīnawarī Ibn Qutayba, *Ta'wīl mushkil al-Qur'ān*, ed. Sayyid Aḥmad Ṣāqar (Cairo: Dār al-Thurāth, 1973), 102; Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-'Arab*, 11:358.

40 The Mu'tazilites call themselves as "the people of the truth" (*ahl al-ḥaqq*).

41 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:528.

42 Qur'ān, 3:7 reads as follows: *wa mā ya'lamu tā'wīlahu illā Allāh wa al-rāsikhūna fī al-'ilmi yaqūlūna āmannā bihi*.

43 Al-Zamakhsharī emphasizes with the following sentence: "And they bite fiercely with sharp molar tooth" (*wa-'aḍū fīhi bi-ḍīrsi qāṭi*). It means that they interpret the *mutashābih* verses conclusively and unequivocally. Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:527–29.

For al-Zamakhsharī, the classification of the Qur'ānic verses into *muḥkam* and *mutashābih* is limited to the theological aspects of the Qur'ān. Those verses which support any or all of the five principles of the Mu'tazilite doctrines are regarded as *muḥkamāt*, while those which contradict them are considered *mutashābihāt*. The following two verses can be cited to illustrate the point. The first verse: "Whosoever wishes, let him believe; and whosoever wishes, let him disbelieve" (*fa-man shā'a fal-yu'min wa-man shā'a fal-yakfur*)⁴⁴ is defined by the Mu'tazilites⁴⁵ as *muḥkam* because it proves their argument for free will, whereas the Sunnites consider it *mutashābih*. The second verse: "And you will not desire unless God wills" (*wa-mā tashā'ūna illā an yashā' Allāh*)⁴⁶ is defined by the Mu'tazilites as *mutashābih* since it contradicts one of their principles, but the Sunnites consider it as *muḥkam* because it proves their concept of predestination.

The concepts of predestination and free will (*al-qaḍā wa al-qadar*) are frequently used to express the absolute nature of divine decree. *Al-qaḍā* means "God's judgment (divine decree) in all the matters from eternity to the end of the world."⁴⁷ *Al-qadar* means "to determine, to measure or to assign," and "*al-qadariyya* are those who consider that every man is creator of his acts and do not perceive disobedience and sins ordained by predestination."⁴⁸ In short, *qaḍā* pertains to pre-eternity, while *qadar* belongs to the present order of things" (*al-qaḍā fī al-azal wa al-qadar lā yazal*).⁴⁹ The Mu'tazilites were against the doctrine of predestination and adhered to the concept of human free will. For them, therefore, an individual was responsible for his/her actions and these actions could not be attributed to God.

3.2 'Ilm al-ma'ānī and 'ilm al-bayān

Al-Zamakhsharī states that knowledge of 'ilm al-ma'ānī and 'ilm al-bayān is essential for understanding the finer meanings of the Qur'ān. He mentions that

⁴⁴ Qur'ān, 18:29.

⁴⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī interprets this verse as follows: "The truth has come and excuses have been taken away and there is nothing left except your choice for yourselves between the path of deliverance and the path of destruction" (*jā'a al-ḥaqq wa zāḥat al-'ilal falam yabqa illā ikhtiyārikum li-anfusikum mā shi'tum min al-akhḍhi fī ṭarīq al-najāt aw fī ṭarīq al-hilāk*). See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:583.

⁴⁶ Qur'ān, 76:30.

⁴⁷ 'Alī b. Muḥammad al-Sharīf al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt* (Beirut: Maktaba Lebanon, 1985), 185.

⁴⁸ Al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt*, 185.

⁴⁹ Al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt*, 181, 185; L. Gardet, "Al-Ḳaḍa wa 'l-Ḳadar," *El'*, 4:365–67.

“no one can understand the real meanings except a person who is proficient in two sciences pertinent to the Qur’ān, and they are the science of expression and the science of semantics and syntax” (*lā yaghūṣu ‘alā shay’ min tilka al-ḥaqā’iq illā rajulun qad bar’a fī ‘ilmayn mukhtaṣṣayn bi-al-Qur’ān wa-humā ‘ilm al-ma’ānī wa-‘ilm al-bayān*).⁵⁰ He mentions these terms twice in the introduction of *al-Kashshāf*, and in his earlier works, *A’jāb al-‘ujab*.⁵¹ According to Zubir,

If something can be inferred from the way he uses the terms, then it is perhaps the possibility that his direct audience, the Mu’tazilite scholars in Mecca, were already familiar with them. This is because he did not bother to introduce, nor specify what he meant by them.⁵²

It will be appropriate and relevant to look into the definitions of these terms by other scholars, before I discuss al-Zamakhsharī’s definition. Abū Ya’qūb Sirāj al-Dīn al-Sakkākī (d. 626/1229) in his *Miftāḥ al-‘ulūm* describes all the linguistic disciplines except “lexicography” (*luḡha*). The book is divided into three major sections. The first section deals with “science of morphology” (*‘ilm al-ṣarf*), in which he discusses briefly “phonetics” (*makhārij al-ḥurūf*) and “principles of root formation and semantic derivation” (*qawānīn al-ishtiqāq*). In the second section, he discusses in greater detail the “science of syntax” (*‘ilm al-naḥw*). The third section is devoted to the “science of stylistics and imagery” (*‘ilm al-ma’ānī wa-al-bayān*), but the terms are confusing in their arrangement and obscure in their definitions. In the end of the book, al-Sakkākī defines the “science of demonstration” (*‘ilm al-istidlāl*) and the “science of poetry” (*‘ilm al-sh‘ir*) which elaborates the “science of meters” (*‘ilm al-‘arūḍ*) and the “science of rhyme” (*‘ilm al-qāfiya*).⁵³ Although, al-Sakkākī does not mention his sources, his work is based upon Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī’s *Nihāyat al-ī’jāz fī dirāyat al-ī’jāz*. Al-Rāzī acknowledges that his own work is primarily based upon ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī’s (d. 471/1078) *Asrār al-balāgha* and *Dalā’il al-ī’jāz*.⁵⁴

Abū ‘Abd Allāh Badr al-Dīn b. Mālik (d. 686/1287), scholar and author of commentaries and compendia in many fields of Arabic philology abridged al-Sakkākī’s *Miftāḥ* in his book entitled *al-Miṣbāḥ fī ‘ilm al-ma’ānī wa al-bayān*

⁵⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:96.

⁵¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar, *A’jāb al-‘ujab fī sharḥ lāmiyyāt al-‘Arab*. (Dār al-Warāqa, 1392), 29.

⁵² Badri Najib Zubir, *Balāgha as an Instrument of Qur’ān Interpretation: A Study of al-Kashshāf* (Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University Malaysia, 2008), 5.

⁵³ Abū Ya’qūb Yūsuf b. Abī Bakr Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ al-‘ulūm* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 1983), 5–13, 75–77, 161–62, 615, 618.

⁵⁴ W.P. Heinrichs, “al-Sakkākī, Abū Ya’qūb Yūsuf b. Abī Bakr b. Muḥammad al-Khwārazmī Sirāj al-Dīn,” *EF*, 8:893.

wa *al-badī'*. His most important contribution is the integration and enlargement of the term *badī'* into the theory of rhetoric. The *Miṣbāḥ* is the first treatise to establish the standard tripartite division of Arabic rhetoric, i.e. '*ilm al-ma'ānī*', '*ilm al-bayān*' and '*ilm al-badī'*'. He states that "*al-badī'* is defined as complement to the eloquence" (*al-badī' huwa ma'rifat tawābi' al-faṣāḥa*).⁵⁵

While the three components of rhetoric were firmly established by Badr al-Dīn, his influence on al-Sakkākī's commentators remained limited in other aspects of the figures. More than a century later after al-Sakkākī, chief *qāḍī* Abū 'Abd Allāh Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī (d. 739/1338) composed two famous compendiums on rhetoric entitled the *Talkhiṣ al-miftāḥ* and the *Īdāḥ fī 'ulūm al-balāgha*. The *Talkhiṣ* is a digest of al-Sakkākī's *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm*. The *Īdāḥ* is a large version of the *Talkhiṣ*. He borrowed from 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī's *Asrār al-balāgha* and *Dalā'il al-i'jāz*, al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*, and some of his other predecessors. Both of al-Qazwīnī's books have completely superseded not only the two books of al-Jurjānī, but also the *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* of al-Sakkākī.⁵⁶

According to al-Qazwīnī, '*ilm al-balāgha*' consists of three components: '*ilm al-ma'ānī*', '*ilm al-bayān*' and '*ilm al-badī'*'. He defines '*ilm al-ma'ānī*' as "the science through which one knows the various existing patterns of Arabic speech by means of which it meets the requirements of each situation" (*huwa 'ilmun yu'rafu bihi aḥwālu al-lafzi al-'arabiyyi al-latī bihā yuṭābiqu muqtaḍa al-ḥālī*). '*Ilm al-bayān*' is defined as "the science through which one knows how to express one and the same concept in ways which differ as to the degree of clarity achieved in indicating this concept" (*huwa 'ilmun yu'rafu bihi irādu al-ma'nā al-wāḥidi bi-ṭuruqin mukhtalifatin fī wuḍūḥi al-dalālati 'alayhi*). '*Ilm al-badī'*' is defined as "the science through which one knows the possibilities of style embellishment and its clarity after its adaptation with the requirements of situation" (*'ilmun yu'rafu bihi wujūh taḥsīn al-kalāmi ba'da ri'āyati taṭbiqihu 'ala muqtaḍa al-ḥālī wa- wuḍūḥi al-dalālati*).⁵⁷

Al-Qazwīnī further elaborates that the '*ilm al-ma'ānī*' deals with a number of syntactical and semantic figures, while in the '*ilm al-bayān*' all the figures that are part of imagery, such as simile (*tashbih*, *tamthīl*), metaphor (*isti'āra*), and metonymy (*kināya*) are incorporated. All the remaining figures are the part of the '*ilm al-badī'*', which are generally subdivided into two categories: *lafzī*, pertaining to

55 Al-Sakkākī, *Miftāḥ*, 370–73; Shawqī Ḍayf, *al-Balāgha: Taṭāwwur wa-tā'rīkh* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1965) 315–16; Udo Simon, "Badr al-Dīn Ibn Mālik," *EF*³, 1 (2009):161–63.

56 S.A. Bonebakker, "al-Qazwīnī," *EF*², 4:863–64; J.G. van Gelder, "Badī'," *EF*³, 3 (2009):142–44; A. Schaade and G.E. von Grunebaum, "Balāgha," *EF*², 1:981–83.

57 Aḥmad Maṭlūb, *al-Qazwīnī wa-shūruḥ al-talkhiṣ* (Baghdād: Manshūrāt Maktabat al-Nahḍa, 1967), 632, 638, 640; Bonebakker, "al-Qazwīnī," *EF*², 4:863–64.

sounds or wording, and *ma'nawī*, pertaining to meaning. These terms become more complicated because the relation between grammar, logic and rhetoric; and between literary theory and literary criticism is not clear and there is overlap between these sciences.⁵⁸

The Zaydī scholar and *imām* Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza al-'Alawī's (d. 745/1344 or 749/1348) *Kitāb al-Ṭirāz al-mutaḍammīn li-asrār al-balāgha wa 'ulūm ḥaqā'iq al-i'jāz* was written as an introduction to the author's lectures on al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*. Al-'Alawī presents his views in great detail and cites many examples. He states that "*'ilm-ma'ānī* is the science regarding the conditions of the Arabic words which are in agreement and conformity with the necessity of stylistic composition" (*'ilm-ma'ānī huwa al-'ilm bi-aḥwāl al-alfāz al-'arabiyya al-muṭābiqat li-muqtaḍā al-hāl min al-'umūr al-inshā'iyya*). So far as *'ilm al-bayān* is concerned, it deals with the attainment of the single meaning through diverse methods like the *isti'āra* (metaphor), the *tashbīh* (simile), and the *kināya* (metonymy) and like that for the distinctness of the meaning" (*'ilm al-bayān ḥasilahu irad al-manā al-wāḥid bi-ṭuruq mukhtalifa fī wudūḥ al-dalāla 'alyhi ka al-isti'āra wa al-tashbīh wa al-kināya wa ghayrahā*). According to him, "figure of speech that demonstrates the word's essential essence depending upon its composition, not from its real meaning, rather exposition of its subsequent meaning, is called *'ilm al-badī*" (*kalām fīmā yu'radu li-jawhar al-lafz min al-alqābi bi-ḥasbi ta'lifihi lā min jihat dalāla 'alā ma'nāhu wa innamā dalālatuhu 'alā ma'nāhu tābi'atun li-dhālika wa hādha huwa al-lladhī yulaqqabu bi-'ilam al-badī*).⁵⁹

According to Shawqī Ḍayf, al-Zamakhsharī was the first scholar who coined the terms *'ilm al-ma'ānī* and *'ilm al-bayān* and drew a line between the study of the aspects of construction (*naẓm*) and the study of figures of speech.⁶⁰ By implication, he is suggesting that the distinction between these two sciences antedates al-Sakkākī's *Miftāḥ al-'ulūm* and al-Qazwīnī's *Talkhīṣ al-miftāḥ* and the *Īḍāḥ fī 'ulūm al-balāgha*.

Aḥmad Muḥammad al-Ḥūfī and Darwish al-Jundī are also of the opinions that al-Zamakhsharī's understanding of *'ilm al-ma'ānī* and *'ilm al-bayān* is the same as that of al-Sakkākī and al-Qazwīnī. Al-Jundī even goes further by stating that al-Zamakhsharī was the first scholar to name the three sub-sciences of *'ilm*

58 Jalāl al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Qazwīnī al-Khaṭīb, *al-Talkhīṣ fī 'ulūm al-balāgha*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Barqūqī (Cairo: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī, 1982), 24, 37–38, 235–38, 347–49.

59 Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza Al-'Alawī, *Kitāb al-Ṭirāz al-mutaḍammīn li-asrār al-balāgha wa 'ulūm ḥaqā'iq al-i'jāz* (Misr: Dār al-Kutub al-Khadiyya, 1914), 1:11, 2: 354; Aḥmad Maṭlūb, *al-Balāgha 'inda al-Sakkākī* (Baghdād: Manshūrāt Maktabat al-Nahḍa, 1964), 360.

60 Ḍayf, *Balāgha*, 221–22.

al-balāgha as 'ilm *al-ma'ānī*, 'ilm *al-bayān* and 'ilm *al-badī*. But he also mentions that al-Zamakhsharī usually used 'ilm *al-bayān* as a general term for those three sub-sciences as a whole.⁶¹

Zubir is of the opinion that,

'Ilm al-bayān and 'ilm *al-ma'ānī*, according to al-Zamakhsharī, represent two sciences, but he fails to draw a rigorous dividing line between the two. He identifies the former with the study of *naẓm* (in other words, the styles of phrasing), and the latter with the study of *ma'ānī*, as meanings of discourse and as ideas in the abstract. This has resulted in certain overlapping areas between the two sciences, in which case what is said to be a *ma'ānī* issue might equally be considered to be a *bayān* issue.⁶²

In general, al-Zamakhsharī identifies 'ilm *al-ma'ānī* with the study of *ma'ānī*, as meanings of discourse and as ideas in the abstract, while 'ilm *al-bayān* with the study of *naẓm*, as styles of phrasing. However, he does not make any demarcation between the 'ilm *al-ma'ānī* and 'ilm *al-bayān* and liberally uses all the figures, i.e. *majāz* (figurative), *tashbīh* (simile), *tamthīl* (allegorical), *takhyīl* (visualization), *isti'āra* (metaphor), and *kināya* (metonymy). Approximately a century later, al-Sakkākī defined 'ilm *al-ma'ānī* and 'ilm *al-bayān*, though still obscure in their meanings. It was not until two centuries after al-Zamakhsharī when Jalāl al-Dīn al-Qazwīnī and Yaḥyā b. Ḥamza al-'Alawī refined these concepts and incorporated 'ilm *al-ma'ānī*, 'ilm *al-bayān*, and 'ilm *al-badī* as components of 'ilm *al-balāgha*.

In the following seven verses, al-Zamakhsharī employs 'ilm *al-ma'ānī* and 'ilm *al-bayān*:

First verse: "He (Moses) said: 'O Lord, reveal to me Yourself so that I may see You.' He said: 'You cannot see Me, but look at the mountain. If it remains firm in its place you may then see Me.' When his Lord revealed Himself on the mountain, He leveled it to ground, and Moses fell down unconscious. When he woke up, he said: 'All glory to You. I turn to You in repentance, and I am the first to believe.'" (*wa-lammā jā'a Musā li-mīqatīnā wa kallamahu rabbuhu qāla arinī anẓur ilayk qāla lan tarānī wa-lākin unẓur ilā al-jabali fa-insastaqarra makā-nahu fa-sawfa tarānī fa-lmmā tajallā rabbuhu lil-jabali ja'alahu dakkan wa-kharra Musā ṣa'iqā fa-lammā afāqa qāla subhānaka tubtu ilayka wa-anā awwalul mu'minīn*).⁶³

⁶¹ Al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 201–3; al-Jundī, *Naẓm al-Qur'ānī fī Kashshāf*, 248–50.

⁶² Zubir, *Balāgha*, 24.

⁶³ Qur'ān, 7:143.

Al-Zamakhsharī's interpretation of "reveal to me [Yourself]" (*arinī anẓur ilay-ka*) is "let me perceive Yourself specifically, clearly, and conspicuously" (*'arrafnī nafsaka ta'rīfan wāḍiḥan jaliyyan*). Al-Zamakhsharī gives the example of the signs of the Day of Judgment when people are constrained to recognize Him clearly. When God said to Moses, "you cannot see Me" (*lan tarānī*) meant "you will never have the capability to know Me in this way and your strength will never have the endurance of this constrained marvel" (*lan taṭīqa ma'rifatī 'alā hādhi-hi al-ṭarīqa wa lan taḥtamīl quwwataka tilka al-ayat al-muḍṭarrata*). He further elaborates that God told Moses that He would appear upon the hill to show His signs and if he could remain steadfast there, he might be able see Him. However, when God manifested the power and reverberation of His command and will, the mountain was leveled to ground and Moses fell down unconscious. Al-Zamakhsharī interprets this verse metaphorically and proves that the vision God is not possible, a position in accordance with Mu'tazilite principles.⁶⁴

Second verse: "God has sealed their hearts and their hearing, and on their sight is a veil. For them is a great punishment" (*khatama Allāhu 'alā qulūbihim wa 'alā sam'ihim wa 'alā abṣārihim ghishāwatun wa lahum 'adhābu 'aẓīm*).⁶⁵

The sealing of the heart is one of the main issues in the Mu'tazilite theology, since it is contrary to the principle of justice (*'adl*). Al-Zamakhsharī interprets "seal" (*khatm*) and "conceal" (*katm*) as belonging to the same category of words, i.e. cognate which are used in conjunction with each other. For instance, when a contract or document is finalized it is sealed with a "signet" (*khātim*) to conceal and cover so that one may not have access to its contents or alter it. He says that neither "seal" (*khatm*) nor "cover" (*taghshia*) has been used in a literal sense but "metaphorically" (*majāzan*). He further elaborates that linking God to the "sealing of their hearts" is "evil" (*qabīḥ*) and God is above doing any evil act. If someone asks what does the sealing of heart and covering of the eyes mean, al-Zamakhsharī replies that in fact, there is neither a sealing nor a covering, rather it has been used figuratively (*majāzan*), that is, as a metaphor and simile. As a metaphor (*isti'āra*), the truth does not enter into the hearts of the unbelievers because they turn away and reject it. Similarly, the eyes of the unbelievers are covered and veiled because they do not perceive the signs of God. Also there is a simile (*tamthīl*) in it because the unbelievers' hearts and eyes are compared to the things which are separated through cover from the perception of the truth.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:501–507.

⁶⁵ Qur'ān, 2:7.

⁶⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:164–65.

Al-Zamakhsharī quotes the following three verses in support of his interpretation: “I (God) am not unjust to My servants” (*wa mā anā bi-ẓallāmin li-l-‘abīd*),⁶⁷ “We never do wrong to people, but they do wrong to themselves” (*wa mā ẓalamnā hum wa lākin kānū hum al-ẓālimīn*)⁶⁸ and “God never enjoins indecency” (*inna Allāh lā ya’mur bi-l-fahshā*).⁶⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī gives five reasons for his interpretation of this verse. First, it is due to the unbelievers’ persistence in denying the truth of which God informs them that their hearts have been sealed. The seal is a consequence of the unbelievers’ deeds and it is not pre-ordained. Second, the seal should be interpreted metaphorically, since their hearts are empty of intelligence (*fiṭan*) like the hearts of the animals. God does not want to prevent them from believing or to force them not to believe because He is above all these things. Third, the ascription of the sealing the hearts to God is metaphorical. In a real sense, Satan or the unbeliever is the one who is responsible for sealing the heart, because “God has granted him the ability and possibility to do it” (*anna Allāh huwa alladhī aqdarahu wa makanahu*). Hence, “the sealing of the heart is ascribed to him in the same sense as an act which he has caused” (*asnada ilayhi al-khatm kamā yasnad al-fi’l ilā al-musabbib*). Fourth, since there is no possibility of their being believers except by force and constraint (*al-qasr wa al-iljā*), God expressed this “impossibility” by the word “*khatm*” due to their persistence in disbelief. Fifth, in the following two verses that have a similar context, the unbelievers say sarcastically: “Our hearts are veiled from what you call us to do, and there is a deafness in our ears, and a veil lies between us and you. So act (your way), we are acting (our ways)” (*wa qālū qulūbunā fī akinnatin mimmā tad’ūnā ilayhi wa fī adhāninā waqrūn wa min bayninā wa baynika hijāb fa’mal innanā ‘āmilūn*)⁷⁰ and “(God) seals his ears and heart, and covers over his eyes with a veil” (*wa khatama ‘ala sam’i-hi wa-qalbi-hi wa ja’ala ‘ala baṣri-hi ghishāwatan*).⁷¹

Al-Zamakhsharī does not interpret the following verses literally but states that Satan’s “power” (*sulṭān*), God’s “command” (*amar*), God’s “handful” and “right hand” (*maṭwiyyātun bi-yamīnihi*), God’s “eyes” (*a’yūn*), and “veiled from their Lord” (*‘an rabbihim lamaḥjūbūn*) have been used figuratively.

Third verse: “When the issue has been settled, Satan shall say: ‘Surely God made you a promise of truth and I made you a promise, but did not keep it. I had no power over you except to call you, and you responded to my call. So do not

⁶⁷ Qur’ān, 50:29.

⁶⁸ Qur’ān, 43:76.

⁶⁹ Qur’ān, 7:28.

⁷⁰ Qur’ān, 41:5.

⁷¹ Qur’ān, 45:23; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:164–69.

blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you nor can you help me. I deny your having associated me earlier (with God).” (*wa qāla al-shyṭānu lammā qu-ḍiya al-‘amru inna Allāha wa‘adakum wa‘da al-ḥaqqi wa wa’ttukum fa akhlaftukum wa mā kāna liya ‘alaykum min sulṭānin illā an da‘awtukum fastajbtum li falā talūmūnī wa lūmū anfusakum mā anā bi-muṣṣrikhikum wa mā antum bi-muṣ-rikhiy innī kafartu bi mā ashraaktumūni min qabl inna al-ẓālimīna lahum ‘adhābu alīm*).⁷²

In his interpretation of this verse, al-Zamakhsharī asks: “What is the nature of Satan’s power over human beings and to what extent can he lead them astray?” He answers this question with the argument that a man either chooses “the mischief” (*al-shaqāwa*) or “the felicity” (*al-sa‘āda*) and gets it. God has no role in either, except “enabling” (*tamkīn*) him, nor does Satan except that he makes attractive (*tazīn*) the choice of mischief with evil deeds. If the matter would be as the Mujbirites⁷³ claim, Satan would say: “Do not blame me and not to yourself because God decreed unbelief for you and He forcibly imposed it.”⁷⁴

Fourth verse: “And when We desire to destroy a town We command its people of luxury, but as they transgress therein Our sentence against them is pronounced, and We destroy them utterly.” (*wa idhā aradnā an nuhlika qaryatan amrnā mutrafīhā fa fasaqū fihā fa ḥaqqā ‘alayhā al-qawlu fa dammarnāhā tadmīrā*).⁷⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets “We command” (*amarnā*) in a figurative sense. He says that the people transgressed despite their being granted benefaction and kindness so that they may become good and grateful. They indulged in sinfulness and moral depravity. When they became transgressors they were destroyed completely because of their transgression.⁷⁶

Fifth verse: “They do not esteem God as is rightly due to Him. The whole earth will be [in] His grip and the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand on the Day of Resurrection. Glory to Him, may He be exalted above whatever they associate [with Him].” (*wa mā qadarū Allāha ḥaqqā qadrihi wal-arḍu ja-*

⁷² Qur’ān, 14:22.

⁷³ The Mujbirites are those who hold the doctrine of *jabr* (compulsion), meaning that man does not really act but only God. The Mu’tazilites applied the term to the Traditionalists more generally, i.e. all those who rejected free will, usually in the form of Mujbirites to the Traditionalists. Al-Zamakhsharī often uses it in his exegesis of *al-Kashshāf* against his adversaries. See Montgomery Watt, “Djabriyya,” *El*², 2:365.

⁷⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:374–75.

⁷⁵ Qur’ān, 17:16.

⁷⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:500–501.

mī'an qabḍatuhu yawma al-qiyāmati wa al-samāwatu maṭwiyyātu bi-yamīnihi subḥānahu wa ta'ālā 'ammā yushrikūn).⁷⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī states that God is addressing those people who do not recognize His greatness and eminence. He states that in this verse the grandeur and magnificence of God has been described by means of visualization (*takhyīl*). He states that His grasping of the earth and rolling up of the heavens in His right hand on the Day of Resurrection expresses His sublimity, exaltation, and power. It is a depiction (*taṣwīr*) of His Majesty and nothing else, without taking the “handful” or the “right hand” into the realm of the literal or that of the figurative. W.P. Heinrichs elaborates that,

As a Mu'tazili, al-Zamakhsharī could not let the stark anthropomorphism of this passage stand. So the literal understanding was out of the question, but to consider the “handful” and the “hand” metaphors would not solve the problem, either, because then the unanswerable question would arise: what do they stand for? Therefore, al-Zamakhsharī considers the image presented by the Qur'ānic verse holistically: *takhyīl* is a visualization of an abstract notion such as God's majesty and omnipotence in a comprehensive picture.⁷⁸

Sixth verse: “The Compassionate who is seated on the throne” (*al-raḥmān 'alā al-'arsh istawā*),⁷⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī states that in this verse *istawā* has been used metonymically (*kināyatan*) for God's sovereignty.⁸⁰ He gives only a vague definition of *kināya*, “mentioning something by an expression other than its own”, and states, that “a speaker cannot denote, through a single expression, both non-tropic and tropic meanings.”⁸¹ Al-Zamakhsharī's denial of the conjunction of ‘proper’ and tropic meanings in *kināya* is related to his rationalistic Mu'tazilī position on the question of anthropomorphic verses and to his rejection of al-Ash'arī's doctrine of *bi-lā kayfa*,⁸² according to which these verses are to be admitted by the believer ‘without asking how’.⁸³

77 Qur'ān, 39:67.

78 In the Qur'ānic exegesis, the term *takhyīl* was introduced by al-Zamakhsharī. The most explicit presentation of this notion occurs in the verse [39:67] being described. See W.P. Heinrichs, “Takhyīl,” *EL*, 10:129–32.

79 Qur'ān, 20:5.

80 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4:67.

81 Abū Mūsā, Muḥammad M., *al-Balāgha al-Qur'āniyya fī tafsīr al-Zamakhsharī* (Cairo: Maktaba Wahba, 1988), 545–63.

82 Al-Ash'arī adopted the method of *bi-lā kayfa* for the literal understanding of anthropomorphic statements in the Qur'ān. A detailed discussion of this concept is provided in chapter 4 under “Anthropomorphism and Transcendence.”

83 Joseph Dichy, “Kināya,” *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, 2:580; Ch. Pellat, “Kināya,” *EL*, 5:116–18.

Seventh verse: "Await in patience the command (judgment) of your Lord; surely, you are before Our eyes." (*wa-ṣbir li-ḥukmi rabbika fa innaka bi-ʿayuninā*).⁸⁴

In this verse "you are before Our eyes" (*fa-innaka bi-ʿayuninā*) is also used as visualization (*takhyīl*), and it means that "in such a manner that We see you and protect you" (*bi-ḥaythu narāka wa-nakla'ūka*).⁸⁵

Eighth verse: "No indeed, that day they will be veiled from their Lord." (*kallā innahum ʿan rabbihim yawm'idhin la-mahjūbūn*).⁸⁶

According to al-Zamakhsharī's interpretation, humiliation, and disgrace of the sinners and transgressors is also an example of visualization (*takhyīl*), because in this world only honorable people are allowed to visit kings, and lowly and vile people are prevented.⁸⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī believed in the indispensability of comprehending the finer and deep meanings of the Qur'ān through *ʿilm al maʿānī* and *ʿilm al-bayān*. In the above mentioned interpretations of the verses, al-Zamakhsharī uses this technique and illustrates his viewpoint figuratively where it does not accord with the Mu'tazilites' principles.

3.3 Questions and Answers (*as'ila wa-ajwiba*)

In Islamic history, this format of argumentation and disputation has been in practice since the medieval period and strongly influenced all fields of knowledge. Hans Daiber states that,

The oldest Islamic questions-and-answer literature endeavours to solve philological and textual problems of the Qur'ān text. Mention may here be made of the answers given by 'Umar to questions about *kirā'āt*, *i'rāb*, *tanzīl* and meanings (*maʿānī*) of the Qur'ān, and of the *Masā'il* (*su'ālāt*) of the Khāridjī leader Nāfi' b. Azraḳ (d. 65/685) on 200 difficult words in the Qur'ān, to which 'Abd Allāh b. 'Abbās answered with references to ancient Arabic poetry. This philological interest, especially present in the oldest Qur'ān exegesis, increasingly made way for textual interpretation as a source of Islamic law and as a starting point of Islamic theology.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Qur'ān, 52:48.

⁸⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:631.

⁸⁶ Qur'ān, 83:15.

⁸⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6:337.

⁸⁸ Hans Daiber, "Masā'il wa-Adjwiba," *ET*, 6:636–39.

Though there is not a uniform model of questions and answers, nevertheless, two principal types can be identified. The first type is purely unilateral where an author presents successively each of the assertions of the adversary ("he says" *qāla*), and in each case gives his reply ("I say" *qultu*). This type consists of different forms such as Ibn Ḥanbal's *Kitāb al-Radd 'alā al-zanādiqa*, and al-Khayyāt's *Kitāb al-Intiṣār*. The second type is presented in the form of an imaginary controversy (*munāẓara*) with a series of questions and answers. The standard pattern consists of thesis (*madhhab*, pl. *madhāhib*) and counter-thesis (*shubha*, pl. *shubhāt*); arguments (*adilla*, sing. *dalīl*) for the thesis; objections to the arguments (*as'ila*);⁸⁹ replies (*ajwiba*,) to objections; pseudo-arguments for the counter-thesis; and replies in refutation of these pseudo-arguments. The best examples of this type are Ibn al-Baḳillānī's *Tahmīd* and Ibn 'Aqīl's *Kitāb al-Funūn*.⁹⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī uses the technique of "questions and answers" (*as'ila*, sing. *su'āl wa-ajwiba*, sing. *jawāb*) not only in the exegesis frequently, but also in his theology book entitled *al-Minhāj fī uṣūl al-dīn*. He asks a question, preceded by 'If you were to say' (in *qulta*), and then answers his question, beginning with 'I would say' (*qultu*).

The following two verses describe a conversation of hypocrites who say: "When they meet the believers they say: 'We believe;' but when they are alone with their evil ones they say: 'We are really with you; we were merely joking.'" But God turns the joke against them leaving them to wander blindly in their wickedness (*wa idhā laqū al-ladhīna āmanū qālū āmannā wa idhā khalaw ilā shayāṭīnihim qālū innā ma'akum innamā naḥnu mustahzī'ūn Allāh yashzi'u bihim wa yamuddu hum fī ṭughyāni him ya'mahūn*).⁹¹

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets these verses by asking a question about the justification of God's helping them, even though their evil friends would like to help them to continue in error which is an act of Satan. Then, he gives three reasons. First, God prevents His "graces" (*alṭāf*) which are conferred upon the believers. Their "abandonment" (*khidhlān*) is due to their unbelief and persistence in it. The darkness increases in their hearts, whereas the believers' hearts become "wide open" (*inshirāḥ*) and "light" (*nūr*). Second, it can be due to "the prevention

⁸⁹ Here *as'ila* is not translated as questions, but as objections.

⁹⁰ Daiber, "Masā'il wa-Adjwiba," *El*², 6: 636–39; D. Gimaret, "Radd," *El*², 8: 362–63; George Makdisi, "The Scholastic Method in Medieval Education: An Inquiry into Its Origins in Law and Theology," *Speculum*, 49 (1974), 652–53.

⁹¹ Qur'ān, 2: 14–15.

of constraint" (*al-qasr wa al-iljā*).⁹² Third, in fact it is an act of Satan but ascribed to God because He has given Satan authority to lead the people astray.⁹³

Al-Zamakhsharī's use of questions-and-answer is intended to clarify his viewpoint and refute his opponent. He interprets the above cited verse by posing a question: What is God's justification to help the unbelievers in continuing their error. He replies to the question by providing three reasons: God's grace, prevention of constraint and Satan's authority of leading the people astray. According to Daiber, "In the search for truth and its causes, the striving for knowledge (*ilm*) found expression in the question-answer literature, in which the didactic element often appears consciously linked to the didactic one which tried to persuade and refute."⁹⁴

3.4 Grammar

Despite being of Persian descent, al-Zamakhsharī was one of the outstanding scholars in the fields of linguistic sciences of grammar, philology and lexicography. He

was against the *shu'ūbiyya*,⁹⁵ and considered that Arabic is the language selected by God for the revelation. He states in his *al-Mufaṣṣal*, a compendium on

⁹² The concept of "constraint" (*al-qasr wa al-iljā*) is intended to solve the issue of the discrepancy between what God wills people to do and what they actually do. Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār distinguishes between what God wills of people "by way of constraint and force" (*'alā jihat al-iljā wa-al-ikrāh*) and what He wills that they should do as a result of their own choice, as voluntary acts of obedience (*'alā jihat al-ikhtiyār wa-al-ṭaw'*). Actions ("objects of power" *maqḍūr*) of the first type must necessarily come into being when He puts the constraint (*iljā*) into effect. But if voluntary actions of the kind He wills the responsible persons (*mukallafūn*) to perform, are not performed this does not necessitate any weakness or defect on His part. Neither do voluntary actions which come about against His will infringe His omnipotence. This is so because people's voluntary actions are their exclusive objects of power and cannot reasonably be within God's power (*lā yaṣīḥḥ an yakūn maqḍūran lahu*). See Michael Schwarz, "Some Notes on the Notion of *iljā*' (Constraint) in Mu'tazila Kalām," *Israel Oriental Studies* 11 (1972):413–27; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 6II: 257, 268.

⁹³ When Satan refused to bow down to Adam out of pride, God expelled him from the Paradise. He requested God to give him time until the Day of Resurrection. God granted his request. Satan said: "My Lord, as You have condemned me, I shall embellish for people (their evil deeds) on the earth and lead them astray." See Qur'ān, 15: 32–40; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 179–90.

⁹⁴ Daiber, "Mas'āl wa-Adjwiba," *ET*, 6: 636–39.

⁹⁵ Originally, *shu'ūbiyya* was the concept of extending the equality between the *shu'ūb* and the *qabā'il* to include equality among all Muslims adhered to by the Khārijites in the early period of Islam. The *Shu'ūbiyya* movement appeared in the second/eighth century and reached its peak in

Arabic grammar, that the Arabic language is eloquent and is needed in all the Islamic sciences, such as the principles of jurisprudence and the interpretation of the Qur'ān is based upon the grammar.⁹⁶ Having a firm command of Arabic language and its grammar, al-Zamakhsharī constantly makes use of grammar throughout his commentary, to explain the text and its multiple meanings.

In the following verses, there are some examples of his commentary where he makes the use of grammatical principles to interpret ambiguous passages of the Qur'ān.

First verse: "God will not forgive those who associate other gods with Him, but will forgive anything less than that to whom He pleases. And he who associates other gods with God has committed a very grave sin." (*inna Allāha lā yaghfiru an yushrika bihi wa yaghfiru mā duna dhālika li man yashā' wa man yushrik bi-Allāhi faqad iftarā 'ithman azīmā*).⁹⁷

This verse, at face value, contradicts the Mu'tazilites' principles of the promise and threat (*wa'd wa al-wa'id*), and the intermediate position between belief and unbelief (*manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*). Al-Zamakhsharī interprets this verse using grammatical principles. He states that God's statement, *li man yashā* "to whom He pleases" applies to both the negative and the positive verbs. In the first case, God will not forgive the one who associates other gods with Him, which implies that the person has not repented. In the second case, God will forgive whosoever does not associate other gods with Him, which implies that the person has repented. It is like a prince who does not spend a single *dīnār* but gives tremendous sums of money. He does not spend a single *dīnār* on

the third/ninth century. Its movement's main objective was equality between non-Arabs (*'ajam*) and Arabs, whose advocates were also known as *ahl al-taswiya*. Most of the *Shu'ūbis* were Persians, although Armaeans, Copts and Berbers are also mentioned in the literature. Approximately, two centuries later, a new *Shu'ūbiyya* appeared in the fifth/eleventh century in al-Andalus by the Berbers and the "Slavs" (*ṣaqālība*) comprising Galicians, Franks, Germans, Langobards and Calabrians. See S. Enderwitz, "al-Shu'ūbiyya." *EL*², 9: 513; P.B. Golden, C.E. Bosworth, P. Guichard and Mohamed Meouak, "al-Ṣaqālība," *EL*², 8: 872–81; Browne, *Literary History of Persia*, 2: 362; Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1977), 1:461.

⁹⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī uses the term *'ilm al-i'rāb* for grammar. According to Kinga Dévényi, "I'rāb is regarded as an essential characteristic of Arabic. It is dealt with by *naḥw* 'grammar' or 'syntax,' and in this sense it is contrasted with *ṣarf/taṣrif*, which deals with morphological and phonological changes in the declension of nouns and conjugation of verbs, whereas i'rāb deals with syntactic changes." See Kinga Dévényi, "I'rāb," *Encyclopedia of Arabic Language and Linguistics*, 2: 401–406.

⁹⁷ Qur'ān, 4: 48.

the one he considers undeserving, while he spends fortunes on the one he considers worthy.⁹⁸

Second and third verses: "And God has made belief more desirable to you and attractive to your hearts, and rendered disbelief and sin and disobedience repugnant. They are those who are rightly guided, by God's grace and blessing." (*wa lākinna Allāha ḥabbaba ilaykum al-īmāna wa zayyanahu fī qulūbikum wa karraha ilaykum al-kufra wa al-fusūqa wa al-ʿiṣyān ʿulāʾika hum al-rāshidūn faḍlan min Allāhi wa niʿma*).⁹⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī defines belief, transgression, disobedience and guidance strictly on the basis of the Muʿtazilites' principles. "Unbelief" (*kufṛ*) is concealing God's benefactions and blessings and being ungrateful. "Transgression" (*fusūq*) is a departure from the belief involving committing major sins. "Disobedience" (*ʿiṣyān*) is renouncing the restrictions and abandoning the obligations imposed by the law-giver, that is, God. "Guidance" (*rushd*) is steadfastness and firmness on the path of the truth. There is a difference between belief (*īmān*) and submission (*islām*). Belief (*al-īmān*) is confirmation with certainty and peace of mind and agreement of heart" (*al-īmān huwa al-taṣdīq maʿ al-thiqa wa ṭamāniya al-nafs*). An affirmation with tongue without an agreement of heart is called "submission" (*islām*). However, this verse contradicts the Muʿtazilite principle because it says God has made belief more desirable and attractive to hearts, whereas disbelief, sin and disobedience are made repugnant, and He has rightly guided people because of His grace and blessing. Al-Zamakhsharī interprets *faḍlan min Allāhi wa niʿma* "by God's grace and blessing" through grammatical means. He elaborates that "grace" (*faḍlan*) is object of verbal clause or verbal noun. If you say how its occurrence is permissible, when guidance is a function of a group and grace is an activity of God, and the condition establishes limit on Creator's activities. I reply that when guidance takes place its expression is manifested in the form of either attraction, or embellishment, or constraint and it is ascribed to His sanctified name. He further states that grace bestowed upon the people is for their guidance, and the grace and blessing mean favor and benefaction.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 89–90.

⁹⁹ Qurʾān, 49: 7–8.

¹⁰⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 569–70.

3.5 *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi-al-Qur'ān*

Another principle of al-Zamakhsharī's exegesis is "to interpret the Qur'ān by means of the Qur'ān" (*tafsīr al-Qur'ān bi-al-Qur'ān*). He states that, "some parts of the Qur'ān interpret other parts" (*al-qur'ān tufassiru ba'dahu ba'dan*).¹⁰¹ He follows this method to clarify and elucidate one verse of the Qur'ān by quoting one or several other verses of the Qur'ān. The main objective is to explain, illustrate and reinforce his viewpoint as found in other verses. He is always precise and does not repeat his arguments if he comes across the same issue later on. The following is an example where al-Zamakhsharī interprets the Qur'ān by other verses of the Qur'ān.

Al-Zamakhsharī proves the unity of God and His justice in his interpretation of the verse 3:18¹⁰² by quoting the four verses of *Sūra al-Ikhlāṣ*,¹⁰³ "Say: 'He is God the only one, God, the everlasting. He did not beget and is not begotten, there is no one comparable to Him.'" He also uses another verse¹⁰⁴ to support his viewpoint that "God, there is no God but He, the living, eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth; and who can intercede with Him except by His leave? He knows what is before them and what is behind them; and they do not comprehend of His knowledge except what He wills. His seat encompasses the heavens and the earth and protecting them does not tire Him. He is all high and supreme." Thus, al-Zamakhsharī reiterates that God, His angels and the people of knowledge are witness that He is the upholder of justice. They are those who attest God's unity and justice with manifest proofs (*hijaj al-sāṭi'a*) and irrefutable arguments (*burhān al-qāṭi'a*) and they are the scholars of justice (*'ulamā' al-'adl*).¹⁰⁵

101 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 238.

102 "God is witness there is no God but He, and so are the angels and those endowed with knowledge, standing firm in justice. There is no God but He, the mighty and all-wise" (*shahida Allāhu annahu lā ilāha illā huwa wa-al-malā'ikatu wa-'ulū al-'ilmi qā'imān bi-al-qisṭ lā ilāha illā huwa al-'azīz al-ḥakīm*).

103 Qur'ān, 112: 1–4.

104 Qur'ān, 2: 255.

105 The Mu'tazilite called themselves as "people of the justice and the unity" (*ahl al-'adl wa al-tawḥīd*).

3.6 *Ḥadīth*

Al-Zamakhsharī wrote four works on *ḥadīth*: *al-Fā'iḳ fī gharīb al-ḥadīth*, *Mukhtaṣar al-Muwāfaqāt bayna ahl al-bayt wa al-ṣaḥāba*, *Mutashābih asmā' al-ruwāt* and *Khaṣā'iṣ al-'ashara al-kirām al-barara*. He studied traditions with Ibn al-Baṭīr, Abū Maṣṣūr Naṣr al-Ḥārithī and Abū Sa'd al-Shaqqānī. Al-Zamakhsharī was the first to revive the science of Tradition in Khwārazm and encouraged the people to study it.

Al-Zamakhsharī cites *ḥadīths* in his commentary which prove his Mu'tazilite views.¹⁰⁶ He uses these traditions as long as they stand on his side, and suit him to interpret the Qur'ān in accordance with Mu'tazilite principles. Despite the fact that he was well-versed with *ḥadīth* literature, in most cases, these traditions are cited with little regard to either their *isnāds* (chains of authorities) or fidelity to the actual transmitted text (*matn*).

Ḥadīth scholars adopted a method *takhrij* for the authenticity and verification of such *ḥadīths*. A *takhrij* of *ḥadīths* is an evaluation in which it is investigated where a particular *ḥadīth* can be found in authoritative collections, what is its complete *isnād* and in which category of *ḥadīth* it can be placed. According to Jonathan Brown,

With the *ḥadīth* canon firmly established *ḥadīth* critics turned their attention away from *ḥadīth* collections and towards the manner in which other areas of Islamic scholarship used *ḥadīth*. In books of *takhrij*, a rash of which appeared during the 1300s and 1400s, a *ḥadīth* scholar took a book from another genre and discussed the status of the *ḥadīths* it contained. Since few books outside *ḥadīth* collections featured *isnāds* when they quoted *ḥadīths*, *takhrij* books first provided all the *ḥadīth* collections that provided chains of transmission for a *ḥadīth* and then discussed its reliability.¹⁰⁷

Jamāl al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad al-Zayla'ī, a Ḥanafī jurist and traditionist, mentions in his *Takhrij al-aḥādīth wa-al-āthār al-wāqī'a fī tafsīr al-Kashshāf li-al-Zamakhsharī* all the *ḥadīths* found in the *Kashshāf*. He verified and supplemented the *isnāds* of the Prophetic traditions where those had not

¹⁰⁶ Generally, the Sunnī exegetes use *ḥadīths* reported by Sunnī authorities, whereas the *Shi'a* exegetes use only those *ḥadīths* which are transmitted by 'Alī and the *Shi'i* authorities. Al-Zamakhsharī quotes the *ḥadīths* from both of these sources as long as they support his Mu'tazilite views.

¹⁰⁷ Jonathan Brown, *Ḥadīth: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford: OneWorld, 2009), 112; Tawfīq Aḥmad Sālimān, *ʿIlm al-takhrij wa-dirāsāt al-asānīd* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2005), 15–35; Maḥmūd al-Ṭaḥḥān, *Uṣūl al-takhrij wa-dirāsāt al-asānīd* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Salafiyya, 1982), 9–24.

been provided. By this process, it is known exactly who mentioned and first recorded any Prophetic tradition cited by al-Zamakhsharī in the *Kashshāf*. Al-Zayla'ī concludes that al-Zamakhsharī used all types of *ḥadīths*, such as “sound” (*ṣaḥīḥ*), “fair” (*ḥasan*), “weak” (*ḍa'īf*), “forged” (*mawḍū'*), and “abandoned” (*matrūk*).¹⁰⁸

About a century later, Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī b. Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, a Shāfi'ī, *ḥadīth* scholar, judge and historian extracted from al-Zayla'ī's work the traditions in *al-Kashshāf* and wrote the book entitled *al-Kāfī al-shāf fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Kashshāf*. He states in the introduction of his book that,

In fact, this *takhrīj* of *aḥādīth* is from the commentary of *al-Kashshāf* which was originally extracted by Abū Muḥammad al-Zayla'ī. I have abridged it keeping its original intent and its beneficial use. I have followed the (original) book particularly in its entirety, except where some *ḥadīths* escaped (slipped away) from him either inadvertently or intentionally. I have extracted from the original book and added some *ḥadīths* to it.¹⁰⁹

There are traditions with praises of particular *sūras* (chapters) or *āyāt* (verses) of the Qur'ān.¹¹⁰ According to Walid Saleh, “The merit-of-*sūra ḥadīths* are prophetic traditions that promise the reader of the Qur'ān varied rewards.”¹¹¹ Juynboll states that, “There are *sūras* and verses whose recitation equals that of variously given, sizeable parts – one quarter, half, two thirds etc. – of the entire Qur'ān.”¹¹² He also states that, “a large number of reports molded in the form of statements and exhortations ascribed to the companions and early successors (i.e. *mawqūfāt*¹¹³ and *aqwāl*) in the pre-canonical collections, especially in Ibn Abī Shayba's *Muṣannaf*.”¹¹⁴

108 Saleh states that, “Many of the *ḥadīths* (other than the merit-of-*sūra ḥadīths*) used by al-Zamakhsharī are only found in al-Tha'labī and they are not even found in other *ḥadīth* works. These traditions are described as “odd” (*gharīb*) by al-Zayla'ī, indicating that they are not found anywhere, not even in books devoted to fabricated tradition.” Saleh, *Formation of the Classical Tafsīr*, 211 n; Jamāl al-Dīn 'Abd Allāh b. Yūsuf b. Muḥammad al-Zayla'ī, *Takhrīj al-aḥādīth wa-al-āthār al-wāqī'a fī tafsīr al-Kashshāf li-al-Zamakhsharī*, ed. Ṣulṭān b. Fahd al-Ṭabishī (Riyāḍ: Dār al-Khuzayma, 1994), 1: 158–62.

109 Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *al-Kāfī al-shāf fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Kashshāf* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1997), 5.

110 Al-Suyūṭī provides the virtues and merits of all the *sūras* of the Qur'ān. See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, 784–806.

111 Saleh, *Formation of the Classical Tafsīr*, 104.

112 G.H.A. Juynboll, “Ḥadīth and the Qur'ān,” *EQ*, 2: 393.

113 *mawqūf* means a tradition traced back to the companions of the Prophet Muhammad.

114 Juynboll, “Ḥadīth and the Qur'ān,” *EQ*, 2: 393.

Saleh mentions that Abū Ishāq Aḥmad b. Muḥammad Tha'labī was the first to introduce the merit-of-*sūra* *ḥadīths* at the beginning of all 114 *sūras* into his exegesis entitled *al-Kashf wa-al-bayān 'an tafsīr al-Qur'ān*.¹¹⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī incorporated the same traditions into *al-Kashshāf*, specifically in *sūras* 91 to 114,¹¹⁶ and Saleh concludes that, "although he copied these traditions from al-Tha'labī, al-Zamakhsharī relegated them to the very end of his commentary on each *sūra*. What came first for al-Tha'labī comes last for al-Zamakhsharī."¹¹⁷ Saleh is right in his assertion, because al-Zamakhsharī concludes his commentary in *al-Kashshāf* of each *sūra* with a number of prophetic *ḥadīths* mentioning the merits and reward a believer receives by reciting it.

Al-Zamakhsharī quotes two *ḥadīths* for the merits of *Sūra al-Fātiḥa*.¹¹⁸ In the first *ḥadīth*, narrated by Abī b. K'ab, the Prophet Muḥammad said that, "the *Sūra al-Fātiḥa*, also known as "the seven oft-repeated verses" (*al-sab' al-mathānī*),¹¹⁹ and "the glorious Qur'ān" (*al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*), was given to me." Al-Zamakhsharī elaborates that *al-mathānī* is derived from *al-tathniya* (repetition) meaning *al-takrīr* (reiteration) or *al-thanā'* (praise) meaning *thanā' alā Allāh* (praise be to God).¹²⁰ In the second *ḥadīth*, reported by Ḥudhyfa b. al-Yamān, the Prophet said: "God had decreed a definite punishment upon a nation; however, one of the children recited, *al-ḥamdu li-Allāhi rabbi al-'ālamīn* (Praise be to God, Lord of all the worlds). After listening to him, God relieved them from the punishment for forty years."¹²¹

For the merits of the last two verses of the *Sūra al-Baqara*,¹²² al-Zamakhsharī mentions a *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet said that, "the reward of reciting the last two verses of *Sūra al-Baqara* "at night is considered to be sufficient for him" (*fī laylati kaftāhu*). In another *ḥadīth*, the Prophet said, "I was given the concluding

115 Saleh, *Formation of the Classical Tafsīr*, 103–7.

116 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 381–470.

117 Saleh, *Formation of the Classical Tafsīr*, 107–108.

118 Qur'ān, *Sūra*, 1.

119 The Qur'ān mentions that, "We have given you the seven oft-repeated [verses] and the great Qur'ān" (*wa laqad ātynāka sab'an min al-mathānī wa al-Qur'ān al-'aẓīm*). It is called *sab' al-mathānī* (*Sūra al-Fātiḥa*) because it has seven verses, revealed twice, and recited twice during the prayers. It contains seven words repeated twice, which are: *Allāh* (God); *raḥmān* (Compassionate); *raḥīm* (Merciful); *īyāka* (You alone); *ṣirāṭ* (path); *'alayhim* (those whom); *ghayr* (not), and *lā* (not). See Qur'ān, 15:87; Thomas Patrick Hughes, *A Dictionary of Islam* (New Delhi and Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1995, reprint of London: W. H. Allen and Company, 1885 edition), 550.

120 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 416.

121 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 125–27.

122 Qur'ān, *Sūra*, 2.

verses of *Sūra al-Baqara* “from the treasures beneath the throne” (*min kanz taḥt al-‘arsh*), which were not given to any other prophet prior to me.” The Prophet also said that, “God revealed the last two verses from the treasures of the paradise and God wrote them with His own hands two thousand years before the creation of the universe.”¹²³

The Prophet Muḥammad said that, “whosoever reads *Sūra al-A‘rāf*,¹²⁴ God will make a veil between him and the Satan on the Day of Judgment and the Prophet Adam will be his inrecessor.”¹²⁵

The Prophet Muḥammad said that, “for the reciter of the *Sūra al-Anfāl*¹²⁶ and *Sūra al-Tawba*,¹²⁷ I will be “his intercessor” (*shafī‘un lahu*) on the Day of Judgment, “witness” (*shāhidun*) that he is free from hypocrisy, and he will be granted ten good deeds. The angels who carry the throne (‘*arsh*) of God will pray for his forgiveness during his lifetime in this world.”¹²⁸

The Prophet Muḥammad said that, “everything has an essence, that is, heart (*qalb*), and the essence of the Qur’ān is *Sūra Yā Sīn*.”¹²⁹ A person who reads it for the sake of God, He will forgive him, and grant him the reward of reciting the Qur’ān twenty-two times.¹³⁰ For the reciter of the *Sūra al-Shūrā*,¹³¹ the angels pray, and ask God for his forgiveness and mercy upon him.¹³² For a person who reads the *Sūra al-Muzammil*,¹³³ God will remove his hardships in this world and the world hereafter.¹³⁴

Reciting of the *Sūra al-Shams*¹³⁵ is considered to be like an act of giving all the things as charity to the poor. The sun and the moon ascend upon him.¹³⁶ The one who reads *Sūra al-Layl*,¹³⁷ God bestows upon him so abundantly that he is satisfied. God relieves him from the hardship and makes things easy for

123 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 522–23.

124 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 7.

125 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 548.

126 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 8.

127 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 9.

128 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 604.

129 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 36.

130 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 198.

131 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 42.

132 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 423.

133 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 73.

134 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 250.

135 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 91.

136 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:3 84.

137 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 92.

him.¹³⁸ For the reciter of *Sūra al-Ḍuḥā*,¹³⁹ God will make the Prophet Muhammad to intercede for him (on the Day of Judgment) and God will write for him ten good deeds by the number of each orphan and needy person in his account.¹⁴⁰ God will grant two qualities (*khaṣṣlatayn*) to the reader of *Sūra al-Tīn*,¹⁴¹ well-being (*‘āfiyah*), and certitude in belief (*yaqīn*).¹⁴² The reward for reciting the *Sūra al-‘Alaq*¹⁴³ is equivalent the reward of “reciting the complete Qur’ān” (*qara’a al-mu-faṣṣal kullahu*).¹⁴⁴ One who recites the *Sūra al-Qadr*,¹⁴⁵ God will reward him as if he fasted in the month of Ramaḍān and spent the whole “night of determination” (*laylat al-qadr*) in worship.¹⁴⁶ The reward for reciting the *Sūra al-Zilzāl*¹⁴⁷ for four times is like the reading of the whole Qur’ān.¹⁴⁸ A person who read the *Sūra al-Takāthur*,¹⁴⁹ God will not count the amenities and comforts which He granted him in this world, and the reward of its reading will be equivalent of reading one thousand verses.¹⁵⁰

God will grant the reciter of the *Sūra al-Quraysh*¹⁵¹ with ten good deeds and reward of circumambulating the Ka’ba and performing *i’tikāf*¹⁵² in the mosque of Ka’ba.¹⁵³ The person who recites the *Sūra al-Kāfirūn*¹⁵⁴ gets the reward equivalent of reading a quarter of the Qur’ān. He is separated from the recalcitrant devils; becomes free from associating anyone with God; and is protected from the great

138 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 389.

139 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 93.

140 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 395.

141 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 95.

142 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 402.

143 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 96.

144 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 408.

145 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 97.

146 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 410.

147 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 99.

148 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 416.

149 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 102.

150 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 426.

151 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 106.

152 In *i’tikāf*, a believer retires in a mosque during the last ten days of the month of Ramaḍān, and does not leave the mosque, except for necessary purposes. The time is spent in the recitation of the Qur’ān, remembrance (*dhikr*) of God, and performance of prayers. The Prophet Muḥammad used to spend the last third of the month of Ramaḍān in the mosque in Medina. See Theodor Willem Juynboll, “I’tikāf,” *EI*¹, 3: 564; G.H. Bousquet, “I’tikāf,” *EI*², 4: 280; Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam*, 222.

153 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 438.

154 Qur’ān, *Sūra*, 109.

horror of the Day of Judgment.¹⁵⁵ One who reads the *Sūra al-Naṣr*¹⁵⁶ will be rewarded by God as if he witnessed the conquest of Mecca in the company of the Prophet Muḥammad.¹⁵⁷

*Sūra al-Ikhlāṣ*¹⁵⁸ is named on the basis of the principles of religion (Islam). Abī b. K'ab and Anas reported from the Prophet that, "the seven heavens and the earth were established upon the unity of God," meaning, that everything was created as a proof of God's unity, His knowledge and His attributes.¹⁵⁹

The last two *sūras* of the Qur'ān, *Sūra al-Falaq*¹⁶⁰ and *Sūra al-Nās*¹⁶¹ are collectively known as *mu'awwadhatayn* (to ward off evil), which are also called *al-muqashqashātān* (to cure). Abī b. Ka'b reported that the Prophet Muḥammad said that, "reading of the *mu'awwadhatayn* is equivalent reciting the complete Qur'ān."¹⁶²

In his interpretation of the verse 2:255, al-Zamakhsharī recounts some of the traditional reports already mentioned in a number of the previous commentaries. However, with regard to the nature of "seat" or "sitting" (*kursī*), he prefers a rationalist approach, insisting that the *kursī* image is purely a metaphor expressing the majesty of God. It is nothing but an "imagination" (*taṣwīr*) and visualization (*takhyīl*) of God's greatness. In reality, there is no such chair, no sitting (*qu'ūd*) on a chair and no one seated (*qā'id*) in it. Al-Zamakhsharī quotes the verse 39:67 to show that people cannot do justice to the true nature of His greatness and power and that it is totally inadequate to transpose the human notions of "seat" or "sitting" onto this aspect of the verse. The whole earth shall be in His grasp on the day of resurrection and the heavens shall be rolled up in His right hand. It is only an "imagination" (*taṣawwūr*), not an actual rolling up and actual right hand. In fact, it is a "physical simile" (*thamthīl ḥissī*) of His greatness. In two instances, al-Zamakhsharī points out the high esteem in which God holds those of judicious minds and those referred to as the *ahl al-'adl wa-l-tawḥīd* – a reference to the Mu'tazilites, in whose theological doctrines the affirmation of God's justice ('*adl*) and unity (*tawḥīd*) are fundamental principles – thereby confirming the Mu'tazilite character of his commentary.

155 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 449.

156 Qur'ān, *Sūra*, 110.

157 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 454.

158 Qur'ān, *Sūra*, 112.

159 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 463.

160 Qur'ān, *Sūra*, 113.

161 Qur'ān, *Sūra*, 114.

162 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 467–69.

He is “living” (*al-ḥayyī*), i.e. the ever-enduring (*al-bāqī*) unto whom extinction has no access. He is the one who truly has knowledge and truly possesses power. *Al-qayyūm* means “always existing for the organization of the creation and its protection” (*al-dā'im al-qiya'm bi-tadbīr al-khalq wa ḥifḍahu*). The word *al-qayyūm* can also be read as either *al-qayyām* or *al-qayyīm*. *Sina* (slumber) is the state of drowsiness (*nu'ās*) that precedes sleep. In other words, drowsiness does not overtake Him, nor sleep (*nawm*), and it is a confirmation of His being as *al-qayyūm*, because it is inconceivable that one who can be overcome in this way by sleep be eternally watchful.¹⁶³

Al-Zamakhsharī substantiates his interpretation by citing the following four *ḥadīths*.

First *ḥadīth*: It is reported that Moses asked the angels, and it was a question posed by his people like the one when they demanded to see God: “Does our Lord sleep?” God revealed to Moses that they should keep awake for three nights. He said: “Take two filled vessels.” Moses took them and God made him sleep, and one vessel was struck with the other, and both the vessels were broken. Then God revealed to him: “Say to the people, I hold fast the heavens and the earth with My power. If I were to fall asleep or drowsiness were to overtake me, they would go off course (and the world come to an end).”¹⁶⁴

Second *ḥadīth*: The Prophet said that in any place where the throne verse (*āyat al-kursī*) is recited, Satan keeps away from that place for three days, no sorcerer or sorceress enters for forty nights in that place. He said to 'Alī, “You should teach your children, your family members, and your neighbors this great verse.”¹⁶⁵

Third *ḥadīth*: It is narrated by 'Alī that he heard the Prophet saying from the pulpit, “Whoever recites the throne verse (*āyat al-kursī*) after every prescribed prayer, no one will stop him entering Paradise, and no one can do it persistently except the one who is righteous or a true worshipper. Whoever recites it before

163 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 480.

164 This *ḥadīth* has been mentioned by al-Ṭabarī in his *Tafsīr*, al-Khaṭīb in his *Tar'ikh al-Baghdād* and al-Dārāqutnī in his *al-Afrād* as extracted by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī in his *al-Kāfī al-shāf'ī fī takhrīj aḥādīth al-Kashshāf*. According to al-Khaṭīb, it has been reported by Mu'ammār, who reported from al-Ḥakam, who reported from 'Ikrama. It is reported by Ibn Ḥanbal in his *Kitāb al-Sunan* as sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*). Abū Ya'lā considers it weak (*ḍa'if*), and al-Bayhaqī reports it as suspended (*mawqūf*). Ibn Kathīr in his *Tafsīr* mentions it as very weak (*gharīb jiddan*). See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 481–82.

165 Al-Zayla'ī mentions this *ḥadīth* in his *Takhrīj al-aḥādīth*. Ibn Ḥajar states that he did not find it. See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 484.

going to sleep God will protect him, his neighbor, his neighbor's neighbor, and the houses around him."¹⁶⁶

Fourth *ḥadīth*: It is reported by 'Alī that the Prophet said: "O 'Alī! The most noble of the human beings is Adam, the most eminent of the Arabs is Muḥammad, the best of the Persians is Salmān, the best of the Romans is Ṣuhayb, the best of the Abyssinians is Bilāl, the best of the mountains is Mount Sināī, the best of the days is Friday, the most sacred speech is of the Qur'ān, the most excellent part of the Qur'ān is *Sūra al-Baqara*, and the most excellent part of the *Sūra al-Baqara* is the seat verse (*āyat al-kursī*)."¹⁶⁷

To illustrate and enumerate the virtues and merits of the seat verse (*āyat al-kursī*), al-Zamakhsharī quotes four *ḥadīths* which fall into the categories of weak, forged, and sound by leading *ḥadīth* critics and in most cases they are weak in *isnāds*. He states that the reasons for the virtues of this verse are God's unity, His glorification, exaltation, and sublime attributes. Nothing is more worthy than God's power and His commemoration is one of the best commemorations. He concludes "that the noblest and highest of the approaches to knowledge in God's eyes is that of the people who focus on the concepts of justice and unity" (*anna ashraf al-'ulūm wa-a'lāhā 'inda Allāhi 'ilm ahl-'adl wa-al-tawḥīd*).¹⁶⁸ In reality, the conclusion should have been that the knowledge of the unity of God is the best knowledge, not the knowledge of some specific theological school, or sect, as al-Zamakhsharī attributes to the Mu'tazilites.

3.7 Variant Readings of the Qur'ān (*qirā'āt*)

Traditions from the Prophet Muḥammad mention the differences in recitation of the Qur'ān (which were permitted by him) and are linked to the seven modes (*sab'at aḥruf*), according to which Gabriel is said to have recited the Qur'ān to Muḥammad.¹⁶⁹ There exists a huge uncertainty regarding the term *sab'at aḥruf* and no reasonable explanation has been offered for its exact meaning. However,

¹⁶⁶ According to al-Bayhaqī, *isnāds* (chains of authority) are weak (*ḍa'īf*). Al-Dārāqutnī and Abū Nu'aym consider it weak (*ḍa'īf*). See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:484–86.

¹⁶⁷ Qur'ān, 2: 255. Al-Zayla'ī mentions this *ḥadīth* in his *Takhrīj al-aḥādīth*. Ibn Ḥajar states that he did not find it. There are contradictory views about its *isnāds* (chains of authority), weak (*ḍa'īf*) and sound (*ṣaḥīḥ*). Ibn al-Jawzī ignored it and considered it among the forged (*al-mawḍū'āt*). See al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 486–87.

¹⁶⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 486.

¹⁶⁹ Al-Suyūṭī provides thirty-five different interpretations of the *sab'at aḥruf* tradition. See al-Suyūṭī, *al-Itqān*, 123–33.

Muslim scholars unanimously agree that the the seven modes (*sab'at aḥruf*) are not the seven variant readings (*al-qirā'āt al-sab'*), which were collected and canonized by Ibn Mujāhid (d.324/936).¹⁷⁰

Frederick Leemhuis states that,

From early works, however, it is clear that in the second/eighth century *ḥarf* was taken to mean the same thing as *qirā'a* in its narrow sense of "variant reading." Early commentaries on the Qur'ān, such as those of Mujāhid (d. 104/722), Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 162/778), 'Abd Allāh b. Wahb (d. 197/812), al-Farrā' (d. 207/822), 'Abd al-Razzāq al-San'ānī (d. 211/827), al-Akhfash al-Awsaṭ (d. between 210/825 and 221/835) and al-Farrā' (d. 207/822), demonstrate that these variant readings did indeed occur across the whole range of lexical issues: from simple pronunciation variants through different case endings or verbal forms, synonyms or near synonyms, to interpolation of whole phrases.¹⁷¹

The promulgation of the 'Uthmānic codex was intended to limit the variant readings, but they continued to circulate. Ibn Mujāhid, renowned for his study of the variant readings of the Qur'ān, was very influential in persuading the authorities to proscribe the Qur'ān versions of Ibn Mas'ūd, Ubayy b. Ka'b, and 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib follow the variant readings in accordance with the 'Uthmānic consonantal text standardized by tradition and consensus of the scholars.¹⁷²

In his *Kitāb al-Saba'*, Ibn Mujāhid mentions three hierarchical criteria for the choice of seven readings. These are: (1) the reading should in accordance with the 'Uthmānic codex, (2) it should be authoritatively transmitted and broadly authenticated and (3) it should conform to the rules of Arabic grammar. The seven readings are attributed to: 'Abd Allāh b. 'Āmir (d. 118/736), 'Abd Allāh b. Kathīr (d. 120/738), Abū 'Āmr b. al-A'lā' (d. 154/770), Ḥamza b. Ḥabīb al-Zayyāt (d. 156/773), Nāfi' b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 169/785) and 'Alī b. Ḥamza al-Kisāi' (d. 189/804). "Three after the seven" are Abū Ja'far Yazīd b. al-Qa'qa (d. 130/747), Abū Muḥammad Ya'qūb b. Ishāq (d. 205/821) and Khalaf Abū Muḥammad al-Asadi (d. 229/844). "Four after the ten" are al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. al-Muḥayṣin (d. 123/740), Abū Muḥammad Sulaymān b. Mahrān (d. 148/765) and Abū Muḥammad Yaḥyā al-Yazīdī (d. 202/817).¹⁷³

According to Rudi Paret,

¹⁷⁰ Shady Hekmat Nasser, *The transmission of the variant readings of the Qur'ān* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013), 15.

¹⁷¹ Frederik Leemhuis, "Readings of the Qur'ān," *EQ*, 4: 353.

¹⁷² J. Robson, "Ibn Mudjāhid, *EP*², 3: 880.

¹⁷³ Rudy Paret, "Qirā'a," *EP*², 5:127; and Frederik Leemhuis, "Readings of the Qur'ān," *EQ*, 4:353.

To the seven “readers” recognized by Ibn Mujāhid were added later on three others, and afterwards another four, but these never attained the same standing as the first seven... After the readings had been limited to the “Seven” recognized as canonical, and to the other “Three after the Seven” and “Four after the Ten,” all the others were eliminated in the practice of recitation. The “readers” henceforward had to keep exclusively to the canonical readings. This however did not completely rule out the uncanonical “deviant” (*shawādh*) readings. They were later adduced as useful evidence in the practical interpretation of the Qur’ān and in the elucidation of linguistic problems.¹⁷⁴

For the interpretation of the following two verses, al-Zamakhsharī uses three variant readings of the Qur’ān to prove the Mu’tazilite principles of unity (*tawḥīd*) and justice (*‘adl*):

“God is witness there is no God but He, and so are the angels and those endowed with knowledge, standing firm in justice. There is no God but He, the mighty and all-wise. The (true) religion with God is Islam.” (*shahīda Allāhu annahu lā ilāha illā huwa wa al-malā’ikatu wa ‘ulū al-‘ilmi qāimam bi al-qisṭi lā ilāha illā huwa al-‘azīzu al-ḥakīm inna al-dīna ‘inda Allāhi al-islām wa mā khtalafa al-ladhīna ‘ūtū al-kitāba illā mim ba’di mā jā’ahumu al-‘ilmu baghyam baynahum wa man yakfur bi-ayāti Allāhi fa inna Allāha sarī‘u al-ḥisāb*).¹⁷⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī states that the conclusive proof of God’s unity is expressed in *Sūra al-Ikhlāṣ* (chapter on the unity)¹⁷⁶ and *āyat al-kursī* (throne verse).¹⁷⁷ God, His angels, and people of learning are witness that He is the upholder of justice. They prove God’s unity (*waḥdāniya*) and justice (*‘adl*) with manifest proofs and irrefutable arguments.¹⁷⁸

According to the first variant reading, al-Zamakhsharī states that in verse 3:18, *annahu* is read with an initial short vowel /a/ (*fatha*), and in verse 3:19, *inna al-dīna* is read with an initial short vowel /i/ (*kasra*),¹⁷⁹ meaning that

174 Abū al-Faraj Muḥammad b. Abū Ya‘qūb Ishāq Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-Fihrist*, ed. Yūsuf ‘Alī Ṭawīl (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, 2010), 44–52; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 2: 302; Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. ‘Alī Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tā’rikh Baghdād* (Cairo: Maṭba‘ al-Sa‘āda, 1931), 5:144–48; R. Paret, “Ḳirā’a,” *ET*, 5: 127.

175 Qur’ān, 3: 18–19.

176 Qur’ān, 112: 1–4.

177 Qur’ān, 2: 255.

178 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 537.

179 The difference between *anna* and *inna* is that *anna* (that) is a conjunction with following subject in the accusative or as a suffix and with nominal or copulative clause, whereas *inna* (behold, verily, truly) is a particle introducing a main clause, with following subject in the accusative or as a suffix. See W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, translated from the German of Caspari (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 2: 78–81; J. Milton Cowan, *The Hans*

“God is witness upon it or with it” (*shahida Allāhu ‘alā annahu aw bi-annahu*). God says that “the [true] religion with God is Islam” (*inna al-dīna ‘inda Allāhi al-islām*) which is a “definite emphatic sentence” (*jumla musta’nifa mu’akkida*) and it confirms what has been stated in the preceding sentence. He interprets that *annahu lā ilāha illā huwa* “there is no God but He” is God’s unity (*tawḥīd*) and *qā’iman bi-al-qisṭ* “standing firm in justice” is “setting right” (*ta’dīl*). When the verse *inn al-dīna ‘inda Allāhi al-islām* “the (true) religion with God is Islām” succeeds the first verse, it means that Islam is “justice” (*al-‘adl*), and “unity” (*al-tawḥīd*), and “this is the religion with God” (*huwa al-dīn ‘inda Allāh*). Anything contrary to it has nothing to do with the religion. He elaborates that anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*) or anything such as vision (*ru’ya*) of God, or the idea of divine “compulsion” (*al-jabr*) which is merely an accusation of “injustice” (*al-jawr*) are not according to the religion of God which is Islām.¹⁸⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī gives three interpretations of *qā’iman bi-al-qisṭ* (standing firm in justice): God’s distribution to the people of their means of livelihood (*al-arzāq*), and their appointed times of death (*al-ājāl*); fulfillment of reward and punishment (*yuthīb wa-yu’āqib*); and His commandment to His servants that they do justice to each other and they act on the basis of equality in their mutual relations (*wa-mā yā’muru bi-hi ‘ibādī-hi min inṣāf ba’duhum li-ba’d wa-al-‘amal ‘alā al-sawīyyati fī-mā baynahum*). According to the second variant reading both verses are read with short vowel /a/ (*fatḥa*). In this case, the pronoun of the second verse reverts to the first verse and it is read: “God is witness that the religion with God is Islam” (*shahida Allāhu anna al-dīna ‘inda Allāhi al-islām*). The meanings are distinctly clear because God’s religion is unity (*al-tawḥīd*) and justice (*al-‘adl*). According to the third variant reading the first verse is read with short vowel /i/ (*kasra*), and the second verse is read with short vowel /a/ (*fatḥa*). In this case, it will be: “Truly, He is witness that the religion of Islam is justice and unity” (*shāhida ‘alā anna dīn al-islām huwa al-‘adl wa-al-tawḥīd*). Al-Zamakhsharī concludes that all three variant readings support his interpretation that Islām is the religion of unity and justice.¹⁸¹

Wehr *Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Urbana, Illinois: Spoken Language Services, Inc., 1994), 37.

180 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:537–38; Jane I. Smith, *An Historical and Semantic Study of the Term ‘Islām’ as Seen in a Sequence of Qur’ān Commentaries* (Missoula: University of Montana, 1975), 93–94.

181 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 534–39.

4 Conclusion

Tafsīr is one of the most important disciplines of the Qur'ānic sciences. The terms *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* in Arabic language mean interpretation, explanation, or elucidation of something. In the first two Islamic centuries, there was no differentiation between *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl*, when used as a technical term for the works of exegesis. At the beginning of the third Islamic century, there arose differences of opinions among the lexicographers and philologists about the precise meanings of these terms and their relationship to each other. Some scholars considered that *tafsīr* and *ta'wīl* were synonymous and have the same meanings, and early commentators used these terms interchangeably. However, others argued that these terms have different meanings.

Tafsīr is divided into two broad categories: *tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* and *tafsīr bi-al-ra'y*. *Tafsīr bi-al-ma'thūr* is exegesis that relies on those Prophetic traditions which are trustworthy in their transmission (*isnād*) and text (*matn*). It is considered by mainstream Sunnī exegesis to be authentic and reliable. *Tafsīr bi-al-ra'y* is exegesis that is based on personal opinion and rational analysis of the text.

Al-Zamakhsharī's interpretations of all the verses quoted above under the titles of his exegetical techniques reflect the Mu'tazilites principles. Whenever he comes across a situation where a verse's interpretation is in conflict with his viewpoint, he utilizes any of his exegetical techniques. For instance, in case of *muḥkamāt* and *mutashābihāt*, if a verse supports his views then it is *muḥkam*, otherwise it is *mutashābih*. Similarly, he uses other exegetical techniques, such as variant readings of the Qur'ān, *ḥadīths*, *'ilm al-ma'ānī* and *'ilm al-bayān* and grammar to interpret the Qur'ān in accordance with the Mu'tazilite principles.

Chapter 4 The Five Principles (*al-uṣūl al-khamsa*)

In the early period of the Mu'tazila school (ca. 200–35/815–50), there was a great diversity of opinions on theological issues, but the majority of them, as all other schools of thought, believed in the absolute unity of God and His justice. They upheld and defended the doctrine of *qadariyya* “free will”, and affirmed the absolute responsibility of an individual with regard to his/her transgressions and lapses in not performing the duties incumbent upon them. Regarding the controversy of ranking the sinful Muslim, Abū Ḥudhayfa Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā introduced the doctrine of “intermediate position” (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*). Similarly, Mu'tazilites were of the view that an unrepentant sinner will be subject to eternal torment of Hell, which developed later in the doctrine of *al-wa'd wa al-wa'id* “the promise and the threat”.

Abū al-Hudhayl was introduced to Mu'tazilism as a student by a number of disciples of Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā. The theology which he inherited from Wāṣil was still in its early stages and not systematically articulated. He was the first to undertake scholastic theology in a systematic manner for which he was remarkably qualified due to his keen insight in philosophy, his sagacity and his eloquence. He became one of the most influential early Mu'tazilite theologians, an able disputant employing conclusive proofs, abundant demonstrations and decisive arguments.¹ He is purported to have been the first who created a reliable and systematic dogmatic framework in his *Kitāb al-Ḥujja* that defined “the five principles” (*al-uṣūl al-khamsa*) of the Mu'tazila. He considered that these principles were indispensable for a Mu'tazilite identity. They were: “God's unity” (*al-tawhīd*), “God's justice” (*al-'adl*), “reward and punishment” (*al-wa'd wa al-wa'id*), “intermediate position between belief and unbelief” (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*) and “enjoining good and forbidding evil” (*al-amr bi-al-ma'rūf wa-al-nahy 'an al-munkar*). These principles provided an indispensable identity

¹ Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 285–86; Abū Manṣūr 'Abd al-Qāhir b. Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq bayna al-firaq*, ed. Muḥammad Muḥyi al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamid (Cairo: Dār al-Ṭalā'i, 2005) 95–102; Abū al-Faṭḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Kitāb al-Mīlāl wa-al-niḥāl*, ed. William Curetin (London: Printed for the Society for the Publication of Oriental Texts, 1842, 1846), 1: 34–37; Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Faḍl*, 254–64; Aḥmad b. Yaḥya Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt al-Mu'tazila*, ed. Susanna Diwald-Wilzer, (Beirut: Bibliotheca Islamica, Imprimerie Catholique and Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1961), 44–49; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tā'rikh*, 6:521; Khaṭīb Baghdādī, *Tā'rikh Baghdād*, 3: 366–70; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 5: 543; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 7: 33–34; Ibn al-Jawzī, *al-Muntaẓam*, 11: 234–36; al-Dhahabī, *Tā'rikh al-Islām*, 17: 348–49.

to the Mu'tazilites, and determined the structure of their theological works for centuries.²

Later on, Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī of the Baghdad school formulated coherent theological frameworks. According to Ibn Abī al-Wafā' and Ibn Quṭlūbughā, Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī belonged to the Ḥanafī school. However, al-Sam'ānī states that he was strongly committed adherent of the Jahmiyya and Mu'tazilite schools and sought to convert people to his belief. According to Ibn Murtaḍā, a large number of people in Khurāsān were guided by al-Balkhī (i.e. they became Mu'tazilites). He was the disciple of Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Khayyāṭ who was the head of the Mu'tazilite of the Baghdad. After the death of al-Khayyāṭ, al-Balkhī became the head and defender of the Baghdad school.³

Abū 'Alī Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Jubbā'ī, a contemporary of Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī also contributed in the development of the five principles. Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī attended the school of Baṣra and received his education from Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf al-Shaḥḥām who was one of the most outstanding and brilliant students of Abū al-Hudhayl. Abū 'Alī succeeded al-Shaḥḥām and was considered to be one of the most celebrated Mu'tazilites of his time. He had two students who later became famous. One of them was his son Abū Hāshim, and the other Abū al-Ḥasan Ash'arī who after breaking away from him, devoted himself to refuting Mu'tazilism and became the "founder" of the Ash'arite school. Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī authored numerous works, but his Qur'ānic exegesis which was reportedly together with the commentaries by Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm, Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī al-Ka'bī and Abū Muslim al-Iṣfahānī, was among the most significant and unprecedented Mu'tazilite exegesis at that time in its comprehensiveness.⁴

'Abd al-Salām Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī, the founder of the Bahshāmiyya or Bahāshima school further systematized and refined the theological doctrines.

2 Al-Mas'ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 3:221–23; al-Malaṭī, *Tanbīh*, 38–39; al-Nasafī, *Baḥr al-kalām*, 227–28.

3 Ibn Abī al-Wafā', *al-Jawāhir al-muḍī'a*, 2: 296–97; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 23; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 4:259–60; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā*, 4: 1491–93; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 4:635; Ibn Murtaḍā, *Ṭabaqāt*, 88; A.N. Nader, "Al-Balkhī, Abū 'l-Qāsim," *El*², 1: 1002; Abbas Zaryab, "Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī," *Els*, 2: 418.

4 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 622; al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, 138–39; al-Shahrestānī, *Milal*, 1: 54–59; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 4:267–69; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 2: 36; Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Ṭabaqāt*, 109; Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Faḍl*, 330; L. Gardet, "al-Djubbā'ī, 'Alī Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhāb," *El*², 11: 569; Hasan Ansari, "Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī et son livre *al-Maqālāt*," in *A Common Rationality: Mu'tazilism in Islam and Judaism*. Ed. Adang Camilla, Sabine Schmidtke and David Sklare (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag in Kommission, 2007), 21–37; Etan Kohlberg, *A Medieval Muslim Scholar at Work: Ibn Ṭawūs and his Library* (Leiden, New York and Köln: Brill, 1992), 342.

Abū Hāshim's most important teacher was his father Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī. He studied grammar with Abū al-'Abbās Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Mubarrad (d. 286/900), whose reputation as a great authority in matters of 'arabiyya was well established. He was a contemporary of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī. After his father's death, he formed and organized a distinct group of his own. Thus, there became two groups, the Jubbā'iyya who were the followers of Abū 'Alī, and the Bahshāmiyya, who were the followers of Abū Hāshim. Even during his father's lifetime, his scholarly standing was such that he argued against some of his father's views. Ṭāhir al-Isfarāyīnī mentions that there were many differences of opinions between Abū 'Alī and Abū Hāshim and Abū Hāshim charged his father with unbelief and disassociated himself from him, even to the extent of rejecting the inheritance bequeathed to him by his father. The report seems to be credible because the disagreement between the father and the son resulted in two schools of thought: the Jubbā'iyya and the Bahshāmiyya, as mentioned above. It is further proved by the evidence that two distinguished Mu'tazilite scholars wrote on the issues in dispute between them. One is Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār who wrote the book entitled: *Khilāf bayn al-shaykhayn* and the other is Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. 'Īsā, who also wrote on the same issue. Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār, who was a student of one of Abū Hāshim's students, often referred to Abū Hāshim's ideas in his books and in many places accepted them and used them as a basis for his own argumentation.⁵

The last major intellectual move within Mu'tazilism originated with Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī,⁶ who developed independent theological views. He was a Mu'tazilite theologian and Ḥanafī jurisprudent. He studied Mu'tazilite theology and legal methodology (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) with Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār. He had profound

5 Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 3: 183–84; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tā'rikh*, 1: 367; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tā'rikh Baghdad*, 11: 55–56; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Faḍl*, 304, 307; Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Ṭabaqāt*, 96, 110; Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 305; Abū al-Muzaḥḥar Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad al-Isfarāyīnī, *al-Tabṣīr fī al-dīn wa-tamyīz al-firqa al-nājiya 'an al-firaq al-hālikin*, ed. Kamāl Yūsuf al-Ḥūt (Beirut: 'Ālim al-Kutub, 1983), 88; al-Malaṭī, *Tanbih*, 40; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 2: 37; Ibn al-Wardī, *Tā'rikh*, 1:367.

6 Al-Maḥassin b. Muḥammad al-Hākim al-Jishumī, "al-Ṭabaqātān al-ḥādiya 'ashara wa al-thāniya 'ashara min Kitāb Sharḥ al-'uyūn," in *Faḍl al-itizāl wa ṭabaqāt al-Mu'tazila*, ed. Fu'ād Sayyid. (Tunis: al-Dār al-Tunisiyya li-al-Nashr, 1986), 387; Fakhr al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Rāzī, *I'tiqādāt firaq al-muslimin wa al-mushrikin* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Kuliyyāt al-Azhariyya, 1978), 42; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 4: 271–72; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 17:587–88; al-Dhahabī, *al-'Ibar*, 3:187; al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-i'tidāl*, 3: 654–55; Ibn al-Murtaḍā, Aḥmad b. Yaḥya, *Kitāb al-Munya wa al-amal fī sharḥ kitāb al-milal wa al-niḥal*, ed. T. W. Arnold (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1902), 70–71; W. Madelung, "Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. al-Ṭayyib," *EP*², 12:25; W. Madelung, "Abū 'l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī," *EP*³, 1 (2007):16–19; Masoud Jalali-Moqaddam, "Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, *EIs*, 2: 130–35.

praise and veneration for the Qāḍī which is evidenced in the numerous references made in his work *al-Mu'tamad fī uṣūl al-dīn*. However, he did not agree with him in all the cases and opposed him in some. He also studied medicine and became attached to the Nestorian physician and philosopher Abū al-Faraj b. al-Ṭayyib. In addition, he studied Aristotelian physics with Abū 'Alī b. al-Samḥ (d. 418/1027). It may be pointed out that all the refinements centered within the context of the five principles of the Mu'tazilites, and these principles are still considered pertinent, and constitute the basis of their theology.⁷

1 First Principle: Unity of God (*tawḥīd*)

The most fundamental tenet in Islam is *tawḥīd*, the confession of divine unity. The focal point of the Qur'ānic teachings about God is the principle of absolute monotheism, such that any type of belief positing more than one deity (*shirk*) is rejected in the strongest terms.

The term *ṣifa* means an attribute 'signifying some of the characteristics of the personality' (*al-dāll 'alā ba'ḍi aḥwāl al-dhāt*).⁸ Claude Gilliot states that,

According to an al-Ash'arī theologian, 'the attribute/quality (*ṣifa*) is the thing that is in (the being) to which it is attributed (or in the qualified being, *bi-l-mawṣūf*) or to which it belongs, and that lets it acquire the attribution/qualification (*yuksibuhu l-waṣf*), that is the qualitative (*na't*) deriving from the attribute/quality (*ṣifa*) ... The Mu'tazilis, on the other hand, are said to maintain that the name is not identical to the object named; for them name and naming are synonyms.⁹

The term *ṣifa* (attribute) is not mentioned in the Qur'ān, nor are divine attributes identified as such; however, forms of the verbal root *w-ṣ-f* are used a number of times, primarily with respect to the description (*waṣf*) of God's acts. The attributes (*ṣifāt*) of God are distinct from the divine essence (*al-dhāt*). In fact, the term *ṣifāt Allāh* was borrowed in Islamic theology from the classical grammarians of the Arabic language. In the Qur'ān, however, the attributes of God are consistently called God's "most beautiful names" (*al-asmā' al-ḥusnā*).¹⁰

⁷ Gimaret, "Mu'tazila," *EI*², 7: 786–88.

⁸ Al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta'rīfāt*, 138.

⁹ C. Gilliot, "Attributes of God," *EI*³, 2 (2007):176–82; Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ṭayyib al-Bāqillānī, *Kitāb al-Tamhīd*, ed. Richard J. McCarthy (Beirut: Al-Maktaba al-Sharqiyya, 1957), 213, 227–30.

¹⁰ Qur'ān, 7:180; 20:8; 59:24.

From the sources dating back to the first half of the second/eighth century, it appears that by that time both the terms names (*asmāʾ*) and attributes (*ṣifāt*) were well established in theological discourse. Through the separation of the derived names from the source of derivation, the term ‘names’ (*asmāʾ*) was employed for the derived divine names, such as ‘knowing’ (*ʿalīm*), ‘living’ (*ḥayyī*), and so on; while the term ‘attributes’ (*ṣifāt*) was applied to the ontological source from which these names were derived, that is, the attributes of ‘knowledge’ (*ʿilm*), ‘life’ (*ḥayāt*), and so on.

A controversial important point in the debate has been whether the names (*asmāʾ*) and attributes (*ṣifāt*) are interchangeable or do they have separate and discrete meanings? From the point of view of the Muʿtazilites, these two terms have distinct connotations, and a name of God does not necessarily entail an exclusive attribute. For example, names like “the knower”, “the powerful”, and “the hearing” are specific and interchangeable, for they indicate God alone.¹¹ In any case, the Muʿtazilites held that God can be called by names like “living”, “knowing”, and “powerful”, but He cannot be qualified by “life”, “knowledge”, and “power”.¹²

By contrast, the orthodox *ahl al-sunna* not only consider the names inseparable from the attributes, but they believe that the affirmation of names without the affirmation of attributes to be impossible and inconceivable.¹³ From this perspective, they regard the names as identical to the attributes, and that the only distinction between these two is that attributes have a derivative quality, while names do not.¹⁴

There has also been disagreement on the question of whether or not the names of God are originated and created or eternal and uncreated. The orthodox *ahl al-sunna* consider the names of God to be eternal, and they hold that before every act God is already named by His names, not that He became named by a name after performing an act. Thus, from all eternity He has been the creator and

11 Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Abū Bakr b. Ayyūb Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyya, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawāʾiq al-mursala ʿalā al-Jahmiyya wa al-Muʿaṭṭila*, abridged. Muḥammad b. al-Mawṣilī (Cairo: Maṭbaʿa al-Imām, 1985), 298; Muḥammad b. ʿAlī Ibn Sallum, *Mukhtaṣar Lawāmiʾ al-anwār al-bahiyya wa sawāʾiʾ al-asrār al-athariyya*, ed. Muḥammad Zahri al-Najjār (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1983), 95–97.

12 Ibn Sallum, *Mukhtaṣar Lawāmiʾ*, 96.

13 Al-Dārimī, Uthmān b. Saʿīd, *al-Radd al-Imām al-Dārimī ʿalā Bishr al-Marīsī al-ʿAnīd*, ed. Muḥammad Hāmid al-Fiḳī (Cairo: Maṭbaʿa Anṣār al-Sunna al-Muḥammadiyya, 1939), 7; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzīyya, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṣawāʾiq*, 298; Ibn Sallum, *Mukhtaṣar Lawāmiʾ*, 96.

14 Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh Ibn al-ʿArabi, *Aḥkām al-Qurʾān*, ed. Riḍā Faraj al-Humāmī (Beirut: al-Maktabat al-ʿAṣriyya, 2005), 2:802–803.

the provider, and He did not become endowed with these names after creating and giving sustenance to the world.¹⁵

The Mu'tazilites are the proponents of the separation of the name from the named, and they regard the names to be something other than the essence of God. They say that God in His eternity has neither names nor attributes, but after He created His creation, names and attributes were ascribed to Him. Therefore, His names and attributes, in this sense, are created.¹⁶

The first fundamental principle of the Mu'tazilites is the unity of God, which is the most important thesis of their doctrine because it is the source of the other principles. According to them, God is one and unique and He has no likeness and comparison with anyone. God is beyond time and place; He is not a body at all but only "something", a being that cannot be perceived by the senses but is exclusively known through revelation or through reason. God is mentioned in the Qur'ān thus: "there is no other like Him" (*laysa ka-mithlihi shay'*),¹⁷ and "there is no one comparable to Him" (*wa-lam yakun lahu kufuwan aḥad*).¹⁸

Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'il al-Ash'arī (d. 324/936) gives the following account of the Mu'tazilites,

God is one, there is nothing like him; He is not a body, nor object, nor volume, nor form, nor flesh, nor blood, nor person, nor substance, nor attributes. He has no color, taste, smell, touch, heat, cold, moistness, dryness, length, breadth, depth, union, distinction, movement, rest or partition. Neither is He provided with parts, divisions, limbs, members, with directions, with right or left hand, before or behind, above or beneath. No place encompasses Him, no time passes over Him. Contiguity, withdrawal and incarnation cannot be conceived about Him. He cannot be described by any attribute, which are applicable to creatures, in so far as they are created, neither can it be said that He is finite. He cannot be described by measure, nor by movement in a direction. He is neither circumscribed, nor begetting nor begotten; measures do not encompass Him, nor do veils cover Him. The senses do not grasp Him, nor can man describe Him by any analogy. He does not resemble the creatures in any way. Neither accidents nor detriment can touch Him. Whatever occurs to any mind or is conceived by imagination cannot resemble Him (*wa-kullu mā khaṭara bi-al-bāli wa-taṣawwara bi-al-wahmi fa-ghayra mushabbihin lahu*). He is ceaselessly the first,

15 Al-Dārimī, *Radd 'alā Bishr al-Marīsī*, 8; Abū Manṣūr Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Māturīdī, *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd*, ed. Faṭḥ Allāh Kholeif (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1970), 65–67; Ibn Sallum, *Mukhtaṣar Lawāmi*, 96–7; Faḍlullāh Tūrpūshṭī, *Al-Mu'tamad fī al-mu'taqad* (Fātiḥ: Hakikāt Kitābevi, 1992), 24.

16 Al-Dārimī, *Radd 'alā Bishr al-Marīsī*, 7–8; Abū Ya'lā Muḥammad b. al-Ḥusayn Ibn al-Farrā', *Kitāb al-Mu'tamad fī uṣūl al-dīn*, ed. Wadī' Zaydān Ḥaddād (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1974), 70–71; Ibn Sallum, *Mukhtaṣar Lawāmi*, 97; Ahmad Pakatchi, Najib Mayel Heravi, and Shahram Khodaverdian, "Allāh," *ELs*, 3:614–46.

17 Qur'ān, 42:11.

18 Qur'ān, 112:4.

and the foremost, He is the one who preceded created things and existed before the creation. He has not ceased to be knowing, deciding, living, nor does He cease to be so. Eyes do not perceive Him, and vision does not penetrate Him. He cannot be conceived by imagination, nor can He be heard by ears. He is a being, but is not like other beings; knowing, deciding, living, unlike those who measure living beings by their knowledge. He is alone eternal, and there is none eternal besides Him (*innahu al-qadīmu waḥdahu wa-lā qadīmun ḡayrihi*). There is no deity other than Him. He has no partner in His rule, and no sharing in His sovereignty. There is none who assists Him in producing what He produces and in creating what He creates. He has not created the creation on a preceding pattern. The creation of one thing is neither more easy nor more difficult to Him than the creation of any other thing (*wa laysa khalqu shay'in bi-ahwan 'alayhi min khalqī shay'in ākhar wa la biaḡ'abi 'alyhi minhu*). There is no kind of relation between Him and what provides benefit; no harm can touch Him; neither joy nor pleasure can reach Him; neither pain nor sufferings can touch Him. There is no limit set to make Him finite. He will never cease to exist and He is not subject to any weakness and deficiency. He is exalted above touching women, and taking a companion and having children.¹⁹

The Mu'tazilites were among the first Muslim theologians to deal with the problem of divine attributes in detail.²⁰ Their general approach sought to avoid any type of anthropomorphism and analyzed the problem of the relationship between the attributes and the essence from a strictly rationalist standpoint. They describe God by means of His "attributes" (*ṣifāt* sing. *ṣifa*), which are syn-

¹⁹ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 155–56. The translation of the above passage is from Wensinck's *Creed*. At some places, I made changes which I consider convey a better understanding. See A.J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed: Its Genesis and Historical Development* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 73–74.

²⁰ In the beginning, the guiding principle was that any attribute not expressly indicated in the Qur'ān should not be affirmed. However, with the passage of time, there evolved a list of attributes by the scholars, enumerated in no particular order. These attributes are as follows: (1) attribute of essence (*ṣifat al-dhāt*): existence (*wujūd*); in the case of God, not distinguished from essence; (2) essential attributes (*dhātī* or *nafsī*), sometimes divided into (i) "negative" attributes which emphasize the divine transcendence: eternity (*qidam*), permanence (*baqā*), dissimilarity to the created (*al-mukhālafa li al-ḥawādith*), self-subsistence (*qiyām bi al-nafsi*); and (ii) *ma'ānī* attributes, "adding a concept to the essence": power (*qudra*), will (*irāda*), knowledge (*'ilm*), life (*ḡayāt*), speech (*kalām*), hearing (*sam'*), sight (*baṣar*), perception (*idrāk*). Some denied that *idrāk* was an attribute; (3) attributes of "qualification" (*ma'nawīyya*), the *ma'ānī* attributes taken verbally: having power, willing, knowing, etc., and (4) attributes of action (*ṣifat al-af'āl*), designating not an intrinsic quality but a "possibility" of God, which God may or may not do: vision of God (*ru'yat Allāh*), creation (*khalq*), actual creation of the contingent world, command (*amr*), decree and predetermination (*qadar wa qadā'*), whose relations with the divine knowledge and will vary according to the school, and consent (*riḡā*). All except four of the attributes depend on the basis of intellect (*aqliyyāt*): they are mentioned in the Qur'ān and human reason can "prove" them. The four attributes: vision, speech, hearing and sight depend on the *sam'iyyāt* and are known only because they have been revealed. See L. Gardet, "Allāh," *EF*², 1:406.

onymous of “description” (*waṣf*) or “name” (*ism*), which they understand to be only words (*al-asma’ wa-al-ṣifāt hiya aqwāl*), by which He is qualified when it is said that “God is knowing, God is having power, and nothing is like that” (*Allāhu ‘ālimun Allāhu qādirun wa-mā ashbah dhālika*).²¹ The Mu’tazilites do not make any distinction between attribute and description (*ṣifa* and *waṣf*),²² but they differentiate between types of attributes, namely “attributes of the essence” (*ṣifat al-dhāt* or *al-naḥs*), and “attributes of the act” (*ṣifat al-fi’l*). The “attributes of the essence” (*ṣifat al-dhāt* or *al-naḥs*) of God are ‘ilm (knowledge), *qudra* (power), and *ḥayyī* (life). God is knowing by His essence, powerful by His essence, and living by His essence. These attributes are eternal and unchangeable like God Himself and not separate from His essence, but are identical with the essence.²³ The “attributes of the act” (*ṣifat al-fi’l*) exist by the will and power of God, which are “will” (*mashī’a*), “hearing” (*sam’*), “seeing” (*baṣar*), and “perception” (*naẓar*). These attributes describe God’s temporal relationship to change, for they come into being when God acts and cease when His action ceases. They do not subsist in Him.

Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’ denied the attributes of God such as “knowledge, power, will and life” (*al-‘ilm wa-al-qudra wa-al-irāda wa-al-ḥayāt*). He stated that: “It is agreed that the existence of two eternal gods is impossible; so to assert the existence of an eternal entity, or an eternal attribute tantamounts to prove the existence of the duality of gods” (*wa huwa al-ittifāq ‘alā istihāla wujūdun ilāhayn qadimayn azliyyian wa-man athbata ma’ana wa-ṣifat qadima fa-qad athbata ilāhayn*).²⁴

Wāṣil’s position on the divine attributes was adopted by other Mu’tazilites and came to constitute their standard view in the early period, until the theory of states (*aḥwāl*) was proposed by Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī, which will be discussed later on, when dealing with Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī.

Ḍirār b. ‘Amr denied that the attributes have any pre-existent reality, and understood them in a negative sense, explaining such attributes as knowledge and power as being an absence of unknowing or powerlessness.²⁵ Al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Najjār (d. ca. 220/835),²⁶ a contemporary of Ḍirār had a similar un-

²¹ Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 172, 198.

²² Al-Bāqillānī, *Kitāb al-Tamhīd*, 217.

²³ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:30.

²⁴ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:31.

²⁵ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:63; al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 166, 281.

²⁶ Al-Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Najjār, theologian was born in the city of Bamm. The sources do not provide the dates of his birth and death. If the report is accepted as true that he died of sor-

derstanding of the pre-eternal attributes in a negative sense, and he assigned the attribute of will a special status. He explained the combination of the pre-eternality of divine knowledge with divine will as follows: “God has been willing (*murīd*) from pre-eternity that each thing that He knows will come to be in its time.”²⁷

Abū al-Hudhayl describes God as absolutely one in the perfect unity of His being, and states that God is “knowing through a knowledge” (*huwa ‘ālimun bi-‘ilmin*), “powerful through a power” (*huwa qādirun bi-qudrati*), etc.²⁸ He maintains that this knowledge by virtue of which God is knowing is nothing other than God himself. He further states that “God is knowing through a knowledge identical to Himself (*huwa ‘ālimun bi-‘ilmin huwa huwa*) and “powerful through a power identical to Himself (*huwa qādirun bi-qudrati hiya huwa*) and “living through a life identical to Himself (*huwa ḥayyun bi-ḥayātih hiya huwa*). Similarly, he said, “concerning His hearing, and His seeing, and His eternity, and His honor, and His greatness, and His majesty, and His exaltedness, and all the attributes of His essence (*fī sam’ihī wa-baṣarihī, wa-qidamihī, wa-‘izzatihī wa-‘aẓm-atihī wa-jalālīhī wa-kibriyā’ihī wa-fī-sā’ir ṣifātihī li-dhātihī*).”²⁹ Abū al-Hudhayl seems to have made all the divine attributes eternal perfections of God’s being, including “hearing, seeing, forgiving, mercy, beneficence, creator, provider, rewarding, retributor, protector, restorer, master and forbidding” (*lam yazal samī’an baṣīran bi-ma’na sa-yasma’u wa- sa-yabṣaru wa- kadhā lika lam yazal ghafūran, raḥīman, muḥsinan, khāliqan, rāziqan, muthiban, mu’āqiban, mawālī-an, ma’ādiyan, āmiran, nāhiyan*).³⁰

row over his argument with al-Nazzām, the Mu’tazilite theologian, it is reasonable to assume that al-Najjār died after the end of the third decade of the third/ninth century. Al-Najjār was a follower and student of the Murji’a theologian Bishr al-Marisi and was influenced by the opinions of Ḍirār b. ‘Amr, although he did not follow him on all the issues. His circle of sources was broad enough to include Ibāḍīs and Ḥanafīs. Al-Ash’arī classifies him amongst the Murji’a, while al-Shahrastānī includes him amongst the Jabriyya. Several reports associate him decisively with the Mu’tazilites, whereas others classify him amongst the *ahl al-ithbāt* “the affirmationists,” i.e. those who affirm God’s *qadar*. The lack of unanimity regarding al-Najjār’s views is due to his diverse opinions on the theological issues. Ibn al-Nadīm in his *al-Fihrist* mentions that he wrote twenty-four works. See Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 313–14; al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 283–85; al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:61–63; al-Sam’ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 5:355; Montgomery Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1998), 199–201; H.S. Nyberg and Khalil Athāmīna, “al-Nadjdār,” *IE*², 7:866–68.

27 Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 283.

28 Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 165.

29 Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 165, 484; al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:34.

30 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:36.

‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd b. Muḥammad al-Tamīmī Ibn Kullāb’s (d. 241/855)³¹ chief contribution to *kalām* was his elaboration of the doctrine of the attributes (*ṣifāt*) of God. He asserted that for each name such as ‘powerful’, ‘knowing’, and ‘eternal’, there was an attribute of ‘power’, ‘knowledge’, and ‘eternity. According to him, God by His names and attributes has always been knowing, powerful, living, hearing, seeing, mighty, glorious, great, exalted, generous, majestic, alone, one, eternal, unique, permanent, first, master, ruling, lord, beneficent, willing, disagreeable, loving, hateful, agreeable, angry, friendly, hostile, proponent, speaking by His knowledge, power, life, hearing, sight, honor, splendor, majesty, grandeur, magnanimity, generosity, permanence, deity, mercy, will, hateful, affectionate, hatred, agreeable, angry, friendship, animosity and speech. The same must, therefore, be said with regard to their relationship with God’s essence: “they are not identical with Him nor are they different from Him” (*lā hiya huwa wa-lā hiya ghayrahu*).³²

Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā‘ī played a crucial role in the development of Mu‘tazilite doctrine formulating a refined theological framework. His theological views underwent some modifications during his lifetime. Since, with the exception of his *Maqālāt*, none of Abū ‘Alī’s writings are extant, his views can only be learned through the scattered references and quotations in later works of the Mu‘tazilites, and the *Maqālāt al-Islāmiyyīn* of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī who was one of his outstanding students. Abū ‘Alī followed the doctrine of Abū al-Hudhayl with regard to the unity of God and refined it, yet he did not agree with all of his views. He maintained the principle of divine uniqueness and stated that “(God) is knowing by His essence, powerful, living because of His essence. The meaning of the expression by His essence is that God does not need in His knowing either an attribute which is knowledge or a state by which He is knowing” (*‘ālimun li-dhātihi qādirun ḥayyun li-dhātihi wa ma‘na qawlihi li-dhātihi ayy lā yaqtaḍi kawnihi ‘āliman ṣifati hiya ‘ilm aw ḥāl yujibu kawnihi ‘āliman*).³³

31 ‘Abd Allāh b. Sa‘īd b. Muḥammad al-Tamīmī Ibn Kullāb was the most influential of the *mutakallimūn* of the period of the *miḥna*. Nothing is known about his life. ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdādī mentions in his *Uṣūl al-dīn* that he argued against the Mu‘tazilites at the court of al-Ma‘mūn. He also states that ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Makkī al-Kattānī and Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad b. al-Junayd, the celebrated ṣūfī, were his pupils. See Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 314; Abū Maṣṣūr ‘Abd al-Qāhir b. Ṭāhir b. Muḥammad al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb Uṣūl al-dīn* (Istanbul: Maṭba‘a al-Dawla, 1928), 309–10; Watt, *Formative Period*, 286–89. J. van Ess, “Ibn Kullāb,” *El² Supplement*, 12:391–92.

32 Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 169–70, 546.

33 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:55–56; Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 182.

For Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī, an entity (*shay’*) or essence (*nafs*, *dhāt*) is an object of knowing (*ma’lūm*) that exists (*wujida*) or does not exist (*‘udima*) and which as an object of knowing, may be directly referred to (*dhakara*) and may be made the subject of a predication (*ukhbira ‘anhū*).³⁴ According to Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī and the Baṣran Mu’tazilites *ṣifāt* are those expressions that name the “essence” or essential entity as such or that describe it as it is in some particular way distinguished from entities essentially similar to it. In these instances, the entities whose reality is asserted in the affirmation of the propositions are termed as the “cause” (*‘illa*, pl. *‘ilal* or *ma’nā* pl. *ma’ānī*) of the proposition or judgment (*ḥukm*) that the thing is so, and the predicate term comes, therefore, to be called *ṣifat ma’nān*.³⁵ By the time of Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī, the two words *‘illa* and *ma’nā* were employed as synonyms, being used interchangeably in most contexts. According to the Baṣran *mutakallimūn*, the *ma’ānī* are not attributes. They are, rather, entities in the strict sense: beings that are themselves distinct objects and that as such are not predicable of something else. In al-Jubbā’ī’s analysis, since God is absolutely one and undivided, and when one says that “God knows” (*Allāhu ‘ālim*) there is no assertion of the reality of any entity other than God’s self (*naf-suhū*) and accordingly in this sense, the predicate term is called an “essential predicate” (*ṣifat nafsīn*). All terms that name or describe the self or essence of a thing as such are, when used predicatively, *ṣifāt nafs*. Thus, al-Jubbā’ī nowhere speaks of attributes, if attribute is understood in its usual sense; he has no term for such a concept and uses no formal expression that implies the reality of such a thing.³⁶

Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī son of Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī held the same opinion as his father, but in the matter of divine attributes, he differed from him to a great extent.³⁷ The most important contribution of Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī is the concept of states (*al-aḥwāl* sing. *ḥāl*)³⁸ which he elaborated in relation to

34 Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 519.

35 *Ṣifat ma’nān* is a term whose affirmation of the subject implies the reality of a *ma’nā*. *Ma’nā* originally meant the “sense” of the predicate or judgment: *ḥukm* the “sense” or “meaning” being contextually understood by the Baṣran *mutakallimūn* as the reality of that entity the presence of which, in a given relationship to the subject, is asserted by the particular predicate. See R.M. Frank, “Ḥāl,” *ET*², 12:343.

36 R.M. Frank, “Ḥāl,” *ET*², 12:343.

37 The differences of opinion between Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī were dealt with by Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār in his *al-Khilāf bayn al-shaykhayn*, which is lost.

38 Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī adapted the concept of state employed by the grammarians for a complement in the case of the accusative occurring in a sentence that consists of a subject and a form of *kāna* (to be) as a complete verb. In this case, the accusative cannot simply be taken as a predicate to *kāna* as it would be if *kāna* were incomplete and transitive; it must rather

the divine attributes (*al-ṣifāt*). He classified the states into five categories which he applied to God and humans. The first category of states is the attribute of essence (*ṣifat al-dhāt* or *ṣifat al-nafs*) through which the essences (*dhawāt*) differ from each other. For instance, the atom (*al-jawhar*) is described as an atom not through its essence but through its attribute of essence. The same applies to God, who does not differ from other essences through His mere essence, but rather through His attribute of essence. The second category of states consists of the essential attributes (*ṣifāt muqtaḍā ‘an ṣifāt al-dhāt*) which are by necessity entailed by the attribute of essence as soon as it becomes existence. The attribute of essence of being an atom that is attached to an essence entails the spatiality of the atom whenever it exists. Thus, occupying a space is an essential attribute of an atom. In regard to God, the specific divine quality of His attribute of essence entails His essential attributes. These are His being powerful, knowing, living and existing. Therefore, God must necessarily and eternally be described by these attributes, which cannot cease as long as His eternal attribute of essence lasts. The third category of states comprises of those attributes which gain actuality through an entitative determinant (*ma’nā*) or cause (*‘illā*) in the subject. They are accordingly termed simply *li- ma’nā* or *li-‘illa* and are said to be “caused” (*ma’lūla*). In this case, man’s attributes of being powerful, knowing and living differ in their quality from the corresponding attributes in God. The fourth category of states consists of those attributes which are actualized by the action of an agent (*bi-al-fā’il*), particularly the existence of a temporal activity which is founded in its producer’s capability. This category is not applicable to God as He exists outside of time. While the existence of all created beings is considered as belonging to this category, God’s existence is as an essential attribute entailed by His attribute of essence. The fifth category comprises those states which gain actuality neither by virtue of the essence nor by an entitative determinant (*lā li-al-nafs wa-lā li-ma’nā*). To this category belongs the attribute of

be understood as a *ḥāl*. He “established a compromise by going back to the original Qur’ānic statements and inserting a copula into them (which is normally absent from nontemporal statements in Arabic): *Allāhu ‘ālimun* thus became *kāna Allāhu ‘āliman*, ‘God is knowing’. The copula was then understood as ‘complete verb,’ that is, it gained existential meaning: ‘God is;’ the assertion of God’s reality had been made explicit. The participle for ‘knowing,’ however, now put into the accusative instead of the nominative, was no longer interpreted as a predicate but as a *ḥāl*, a ‘state’ of the subject instead of an attribute. In the words of Abū Hāshim himself: ‘Since, it is true that [God] has a state in His being knowing, the knowledge that He is knowing is a knowledge of the thing itself [that is, the subject as] in this state rather than a knowledge of the act of knowing or of the thing itself.’ This theory allowed the above statements to be understood univocally of all knowers: a theological problem had been put into the general framework of grammatical analysis.” See J. van Ess, “Mu’tazilah,” *ER*, 10:220–29.

“being perceiving” (*kawnuhū mudrikan*) which is entailed by the perceiver’s being living. In regard to God, it gains actuality when the condition (*shart*) of the presence of the perceptible is fulfilled. On the other hand, in order to perceive, human beings must possess senses in addition to the existence of the perceptible. This is not required for God, whose being alive is an essential attribute. Thus, He perceives without senses.³⁹

With regard to cosmology, Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī deals with the following issues. The first issue relates to “the solitary substances” (*al-jawāhir al-munfarida*) or “the parts which cannot be further divided” (*al-ajzā’ lā yatajazzā’*) – that is, the “atom” (*juz*)⁴⁰ of which all corporeal things are composed. Both Abū ‘Alī and Abū Hāshim are of the opinion that they belong to one genus, being similar to one another. The second issue was whether the atoms were of the nature of “substance” (*jawhar*) in their state of nonexistence, i.e. prior to their creation by God. The purpose was to find out whether God’s knowledge and power only pertain to the existentialization of the atoms, or does the determination of what is to be “substance” (*jawhar*) and what is to be “accident” (*‘araḍ*) also devolve upon this divine knowledge and power? In other words, do the knowledge and power of God merely bestow existence (*wujūd*) or do they also determine essence (*dhāt*) as well? Both Abū ‘Alī and Abū Hāshim considered that a substance (*jawhar*) is substance prior to its coming into existence, its substantiality being immutably fixed (*thābit*); thus only God brings it into existence. The third issue concerned whether the existence of the “void” (*khalā*) was possible or impossible in the corporeal world (*‘ālam al-ajsām*). Abū Hāshim believed that such void was not only possible, but in fact necessary. His reasoning on the necessity of the void was based on common sense experience. The fourth issue relates to atoms, and Abū Hashim maintained that atoms are possessed of extension and dimensions and have “aspect” (*jiha*) and “location” (*taḥayyuz*).⁴¹

According to Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī,

He (God) is knowing by His essence in the sense that He has a state which is an attribute, known over and above His being that is an existing essence. The attribute can only be known with the essence, not in isolation. These states are established attributes which are neither existent, nor known, nor unknown. This means that they are not known in

³⁹ Sabine Schmidtke, “Jobbā’ī,” *Elr*, 14:666–72; R.M. Frank, “Ḥāl,” *El*², 12:343.

⁴⁰ *Juz*’ (pl. *ajzā’*) used in technical language of *kalām* and of *flaṣṣa* describes the atom in the sense of ultimate (substantial) part, “that cannot be divided further” (*alladhī lā yatajazzā’*). See al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta’rīfāt*, 78; L. Gardet, “Djuz,” *El*², 2:607–8.

⁴¹ Abū Rashīd Sa’īd b. Muḥammad Sa’īd al-Naysābūrī, *al-Masā’il fī al-khilāf bayna al-Baṣriyyīn wa al-Baḡhdādiyyīn*, ed. Ma’an Ziyāda and Riḍwān al-Sayyid (Tripoli: Ma’had al-Inmā al-Arabī, 1979), 29–59; Schmidtke, “Jobbā’ī,” *Elr*, 14:666–72.

themselves as attributes, but are known with the essence" (*huwa 'ālimun li-dhātihi bi-ma'na annahu dhū ḥāla hiya šifat ma'lūma warā' kawnihi dhātan mawjūdan, wa-innamā ta'lamu al-šifat 'alā al-dhāti lā bi-infirādhā, fa-athbata aḥwālan hiya šifat lā mawjūda wa-lā ma'lūma wa-lā majhūla, ay hiya 'alā ḥiyāliha lā ta'rīf kadhālika bal ma' al-dhāt*).⁴²

Abū Hāshim differs from the rest of the Mu'tazilites with regard to the divine attributes. "His theory rests on the premise that the two philosophical-theological concepts of existence (*wujūd*) and nonexistence (*'adam*) must be supplemented by a third concept, that of state (*ḥāl*). He then identifies God's attributes as states that do not possess an independent existence of their own but nevertheless are real things."⁴³

Qāḍī Abū al-Ḥasan 'Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadhānī⁴⁴ adhered to the five principles (*usūl al-khamsa*) in his *Kitāb al-Uṣūl al-khamsa*. However, in *al-*

⁴² According to Abū Hāshim, a state is not an entity or a thing (*dhāt, shay'*) and can thus neither be said to be existent (*mawjūd*) nor nonexistent (*ma'dūm*). Not being entities themselves, he states can likewise not be known in isolation. Rather, the essence is known to be qualified through them. Thus, Abū Hāshim speaks of the actuality (*ḥuṣūl*) of the states and their initiation (*tajaddud*), while he refrains from asserting for them a coming to be (*ḥudūth*) that would imply their coming into existence. See al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:56; Daniel Gimaret et Guy Monnot, *Le Livre des religions et des sectes* (Louvain/Paris: Peeters/Unesco, 1986), 1:277–78; Schmidtke, *Jobbā'i, Elr*, 16:66–72.

⁴³ Ahmad Pakatchi, Najib Mayel Heravi, and Shahram Khodaverdian, "Allāh," *EIs*, 3:614–46.

⁴⁴ Qāḍī Abū al-Ḥasan 'Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadhānī was born about 325/937 in Asadabād near Hamadhān (Iran). As a student he adhered to the theology of al-Ash'arī and to the jurisprudence of al-Shaf'i. Later, he left Ash'arite theology and converted to the school of the Mu'tazilite. He studied with Abū Ishāq b. 'Ayyāsh al-Baṣrī (d. 386/996) at Baṣra, who was a pupil of Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'i, the son of Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'i, both of whom became the main sources of his writings. After sometime, 'Abd al-Jabbār travelled to Baghdād, where he became a student of Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī (d. 369/980) the leading scholar of the Bahshāmiyya at that time. After the death of Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Baṣrī, he became the leading scholar of the Bahshāmiyya. In 360/971, Ṣāḥib Ismā'il b. Abbād (d. 385/995), vizier of the Buwayhid Sulṭān Fakhr al-Dawla (d. 387/997) appointed 'Abd al-Jabbār the "chief judge" (*qāḍī al-quḍāt*) of Ray with jurisdiction over northern Jibāl. Later his authority was extended over other provinces, including Gorgān, Ṭabaristān, and Hamadhān. Shortly after the death of Ibn 'Abbād, he was dismissed and his possessions were confiscated by Fakhr al-Dawla. According to some biographers, this was punishment for his remarks alleging that Ibn 'Abbād died without repentance. Others are of the opinion that he refused to offer the funeral prayer possibly because of bad relations between himself and Ibn 'Abbād due to the latter's lifestyle. It seems that he was never reinstated as chief judge. He remained in Ray and devoted the rest of his life fully to teaching and writing. He taught for some time in Baghdād and Qazwīn. He died in 415/1025 in Ray. 'Abd al-Jabbār was a great scholar and prolific writer of his time. He wrote or dictated more than seventy books on the Mu'tazili doctrine, exegesis, law and other subjects. However, most of these books have been lost. The most important books are *al-Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa al-'adl*, *Mutashābih al-*

Mughnī fī abwāb al-tawḥīd wa-al-‘adl and *al-Majmū‘ fī al-muḥīṭ bi-al-taklīf*, he reduced the number from five to only two principles: unity of God (*al-tawḥīd*) and justice (*al-‘adl*). In these books, he deals with the three remaining principles within the framework of these two principles – *al-tawḥīd* and *al-‘adl*.

Qāḍī ‘Abd al-Jabbār relies upon Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī’s concepts when he discusses God’s attributes. Material things consist of substance (*jawhar* pl. *jawā-hir*) and accidents (*a’rāḍ* sing. *‘araḍ*) which inhere in the substrate (*maḥall*) formed by the substance. The qualities (*ṣifāt* sing. *ṣifa*) of a material thing are determined by the accidents, some of which remain until an opposing accident occurs and some of which cease to exist of their own accord. ‘Abd al-Jabbār also adopted the concept of state (*ḥāl*) in his discussion of some qualities of God and human beings.⁴⁵

According to ‘Abd al-Jabbār, God is neither a substance nor a material object, nor an accident and nor a substrate. This means that God is imperceptible and His qualities or attributes do not inhere in a substrate. God is one, which means that He is unique and indivisible. God is existent (*mawjūd*)⁴⁶ and His existence has no beginning and no end, He is the eternal (*al-qadīm*).⁴⁷ God has eternal attributes that belong to His essence (*dhāt*), He is able to act (*qādir*),⁴⁸ He is knowing (*‘ālim*)⁴⁹ and He is living (*ḥayyī*).⁵⁰ He also states that God’s attributes cannot

Qur’ān, Kitāb al-Majmū‘ fī al-Muḥīṭ bil-taklīf and *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*. *Sharḥ* is an exposition of the five principles to which all the Mu’tazilites subscribe. He was a devoted teacher and could count as his students virtually all the prominent Mu’tazilite scholars of the following generation: Abū Rashīd Sa’īd b. Muḥammad Naysābūrī, Abū al-Ḥusayn Baṣrī, Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥasan b. Aḥmad Ibn Mattawayh, Abū Yūsuf Qazwīnī, and the Imāmite Sharīf al-Raḍī and Sharīf al-Murtaḍā. See Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Ṭabaqat*, 112–13; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 1:256–8; Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, 11:113–15; al-Sam’ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 1:141; al-Subkī, *Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfi’iyya*, 5:97–98; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, 9:111; S.M. Stern, “Abū ‘l-Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Djabbār b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Djabbār al-Hamadhānī al-Asadabādī,” *EF*², 1:59; M. Heemskerk, “Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadhānī,” *EF*³, 3 (2007): 9–18.

45 Stern, “‘Abd al-Djabbār b. Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Djabbār al-Hamadhānī al-Asadabādī, Abū ‘l-Ḥasan,” *EF*², 1:59–60.

46 Qāḍī ‘Imād al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadhānī al-Asadabādī, *Kitāb al-Majmū‘ fī al-muḥīṭ bi-al-taklīf*, ed. J.J. Houben (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1965), 1:133–43; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 5:232–40.

47 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 4:250–51.

48 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Muḥīṭ*, 1:103–12; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 5:204–18; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 151–56.

49 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Muḥīṭ*, 1:113–20; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 5:219–28; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 156–60.

50 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Muḥīṭ*, 1:121–28; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 5:229–31; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 160–67.

relate to Him as accidents relate to bodies. And since God is wholly immaterial, He is unchangeable, for only matter is subject to change in the sense of growing, deteriorating and perishing. However, because God alone is eternal, the attributes, which characterize Him, can also be eternal notions existing beside Him in eternity. Therefore, they must be qualities, which are inseparable from His essence. So, there are two kinds of attributes: accidents with a certain level of materiality, which cause change in bodies, and divine attributes which are parts of God's immaterial and unchanging essence. This means that God acts through the qualities of what He is, and His attributes of being able to act, knowing, living, existing and perceiving subsist in His essence. Since God's essence is eternal, His attributes exist in Him in eternity. "God acts through Himself" (*li-nafsihī*) refers to the attributes which exist in the divine essence and express its qualities. In this way, he attributes different qualities to God without violating the unified nature of His essence. In contrast to human ability, God's eternal ability can accomplish everything. His knowledge circumscribes all that can be known, whether existent or nonexistent, and His perception perceives all that can be perceived.⁵¹

Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Ash'arī's opinions on the divine names and attributes were adopted as the definitive Sunnī orthodox view. His own views were largely inspired by that of Ibn Kullāb despite formal differences among them. Al-Ash'arī developed his views in a work dedicated to the subject, *Kitāb al-Ṣifāt*, no longer extant, as well as generally in his other theological works.⁵² He maintains that God has eight attributes of essence, i.e. "knowing" (*'ālim*), "powerful" (*qādir*), "living" (*ḥayyī*), "willing" (*murīd*), "speaking" (*mutakallim*), "hearing" (*samī*), "seeing" (*baṣīr*), and "permanence" (*baqā*), from which all other attributes are derived. He divides the attributes into two categories: those that entail divine acts (*af'āl*, sing. *fī'l*), such as life, knowledge and power; and those attributes such as hearing, sight, speech and permanence, which can only be associated with the divine essence (*ṣifāt al-dhāt*).⁵³

51 J.R.T.M. Peters, *God's Created Speech: A Study in the Speculative Theology of the Mu'tazilī Qāḍī al-Quḍāt Abū al-Ḥasan 'Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadānī* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 224–77; Heemskerk, "'Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad al-Hamadānī," *EF*, 3 (2007): 9–18.

52 Abū al-Qāsim 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. Hibat Allāh Ibn 'Asākir, *Tabyīn kadhīb al-muftarī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1979), 128–34.

53 Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'īl al-Ash'arī, *Kitāb al-Luma' fī al-radd 'alā ahl al-zaygh wa al-bida'*, ed. and translated by Richard J. McCarthy (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1953), 10–14; al-Shahrastānī, *Milāl*, 1:67; Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad maqālāt al-Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī*, ed. Daniel Gimaret (Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1987), 42–44, 237; Mohammad Javad Anvari and Matthew Melvin Koushki, "Al-Ash'arī," *ELs*, 3: 833–59.

With regard to God's attributes, al-Zamakhsharī follows Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā' (d. 131/748),⁵⁴ and does not agree with Abū al-Hudhayl, Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī.

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the following verse lexicographically, "As regards the people of 'Ād, they became arrogant on the earth unjustly, and said "Who is stronger in power than us?" Did they not see that God who created them is superior to them in power?" (*fa ammā 'Ād fa-stakbaru fī al-arḍ bi-ghayr al-ḥaqq wa qālū man ashaddu minnā quwwa awa lam yara'u anna Allāh alladhī khalaqahum huwa ashaddu minhum quwwa*).⁵⁵ He defines "power" (*quwwa*) as strength in physique and its opposite is "weakness" (*du'f*). The power of human beings, by all means is right when an action is performed by an agent which is contrary to weakness. However, God is described with the power meaning His omnipotence. God is more powerful than men because His power emanates from His essence of which they are not capable.⁵⁶ Similarly, he interprets the verse: "Do you not know that God knows whatever is in the heavens and on the earth?" (*alam ta'lam anna Allāha ya'lamu mā fī samā'i wa al-arḍ*).⁵⁷ In this verse, he states that God knows by His essence and He is certainly not restrained in it. So, his interpretation of God's knowledge is in accordance with the Mu'tazilite principles.⁵⁸ In another verse "God, there is no god but He, the living, the eternal" (*Allāhu lā ilāha illā huwa al-ḥayyī al-qayyūm*),⁵⁹ al-Zamakhsharī interprets "the living" (*al-ḥayyī*) as "the eternal for whom there is no possibility of cessation" (*al-bāqī alladhī lā sabīl 'alayhi lil-fanā*). Here, he does not say that God is living by His essence because the Mu'tazilites do not believe in the "attribute of existentialism" (*ṣifat wujūdiyya*) and al-Zamakhsharī adheres to it.⁶⁰

2 Createdness of the Qur'ān (*khalq al-Qur'ān*)

Under the term *tawḥīd* (unity of God), there are a number of conceptions regarding the nature of God which are controversial in theological discussions, for ex-

54 Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā' denies the attributes of God such as "knowledge, power, will and life" (*al-'ilm wa-al-quḍra wa-al-irāda wa-al-ḥayāt*). See al-Shahrastānī, *Milāl*, 1: 31.

55 Qur'ān, 41: 15.

56 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 375–76.

57 Qur'ān, 22: 70.

58 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 210.

59 Qur'ān, 2:255.

60 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 480.

ample, His speech, anthropomorphic accounts about Him, and the vision of Him in the hereafter.

All the Muslims throughout the centuries have agreed that the Qur'ān is God's speech (*kalām Allāh*). The difference of opinions, however, remains upon the eternity of the Qur'ān or its createdness. According to the Sunnite, the Qur'ān is the speech of God, uncreated (*kalām Allāh ghayr makhḷūq*), whereas the Mu'tazilites' thesis is that the Qur'ān is created (*makhḷūq*).⁶¹

The biographical sources mention Ja'd b. Dirham (d. 125/743) and Jahm b. Ṣafwān (d. 128/745) as the first proponents of the createdness of the Qur'ān. Ja'd b. Dirham advanced the doctrines of the created Qur'ān and of free will, and professed a radical doctrine of denial of the divine attributes (*ta'ṭīl*). According to him, God did not speak to Moses, nor take Abraham as His friend.⁶²

Jahm b. Ṣafwān also believed in the doctrine of the created Qur'ān. Jahm's view was founded on the strict assertion that God alone is eternal; all others, including Heaven, Hell, and even the prototype of scripture – written on “the preserved tablet” (*al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz*), and the “heavenly original scripture” (*umm al-kitāb*) are created. Jahm held that God could not have a physical body like his creatures. Therefore God's attributes such as His speech must be unlike the speech of His creatures.⁶³

The Mu'tazilites consider that the Qur'ān is the speech of God and it is created by Him. Their reasoning is that God, identical with His attributes, is not subject to change. Therefore, it is impossible that the Qur'ān, in the sense of an attribute, is uncreated, for it is essentially multiple and temporal. Al-Shahrasatānī states that: “They agree that His speech is temporal and created in a place. It comprises letters and sounds written in their images in the scriptures. What is found in a place is an accident which perishes instantly” (*wa ittafaqu 'alā*

61 The Mu'tazilites affirm that the Qur'ān is the speech of God. Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār states that “Our doctrine is that the Qur'ān is the speech of God (*kalām Allāh*) and His revelation (*waḥyuhu*) is created (*makhḷūq*) and temporal (*muḥḍath*).” See 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 528.

62 Ja'd b. Dirham was a native of Khurāsān but spent most of his life at Damascus. He was imprisoned and executed in 125/743, on the orders of caliph Hishām b. 'Abd al-Malik. Very few facts are known on the doctrinal position of Ja'd b. Dirham. He is described as *dahrī* and appears prominently in the list of *zindīqs* in *al-Fihrist*. He is also associated with Jahm b. Ṣafwān. See G. Vajda, “Ibn Dirham Dja'd,” *EF*, 3: 747.

63 Abū Muḥriz Jahm b. Ṣafwān, early theologian, sometimes called al-Tirmidhī or al-Samarqandī was a client of Rāsib and secretary to al-Ḥārith b. Surayj, who revolted against the Umayyads and from 116/734 to 128/746 controlled tracts of eastern Khurāsān. Jahm was captured and executed in 128/746, shortly before al-Ḥārith himself. Jahm was intellectual protagonist of al-Ḥārith's movement of revolt. See al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 280; Montgomery Watt, “Djahm b. Ṣafwān,” *EF*, 2: 388.

*anna kalāmahu muḥdath makhlūq fī maḥall wa huwa ḥarf wa ṣawt kutiba amthā-lahu fī al-maṣāḥif ḥikāyāt ‘anhu fa-inna mā wujida fī al-maḥall ‘araḍa fa-qad fana fī al-ḥal).*⁶⁴

Abū al-Hudhayl asserts that “God, Exalted, created the Qurʾān on the preserved tablet and it is an accident. The Qurʾān exists in three places: in a place where it is preserved in memory, in a place where it is written and in a place where it is recited and audible” (*inna Allāh ‘azza wa jall khalaqa al-Qurʾān fī al-lawḥ al-maḥfūz wa huwa ‘araḍ wa inna al-Qurʾān yūjida fī thalāthat amākin fī makān huwa maḥfūz fihi wa fī makān huwa maktūb fihi wa fī makān huwa fihi matluwwun wa masmū’un*). He further states that God’s speech is found at various places (*kalām Allāh qad yūjida fī amākin kathīra*). When God will cause all the places to perish, the Qurʾān where it is preserved, recited or audible will also not exist.⁶⁵

Ibn Kullāb introduced a distinction between the speech of God (*kalām Allāh*) and its realization. God is “eternally speaking (*lam yazal mutakallim*), but He can only be *mutakallim*, addressing Himself to somebody, if this addressee exists. Speech is a permanent and unchangeable attribute (*ṣifa* or *ma’nā*) which subsists in God; but when, in revelation, it becomes speech to somebody, it is subject to alteration: it may be represented in various languages, such as Arabic or Hebrew, and must adapt itself to various situations by taking the form of an order, a statement etc... God’s speech is eternal not by itself but by the eternity of God’s essence.”⁶⁶

Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī state that God is a speaker with a word which He creates in a substrate. For both of them, the “reality of speech” (*ḥaqīqat al-kalām*) consists essentially of fragmentary sounds (*aṣwāt muqaṭṭa’a*) and orderly arrangement of letters (*ḥurūf manzūma*). The speaker is the one who creates the word and not the one in whom the word subsists. However, Abū ‘Alī differs from other Mu’tazilites, especially in saying that God creates His own word in the place of recitation whenever a man himself recites the Qurʾān.⁶⁷

‘Abd al-Jabbār follows Abū ‘Alī Jubbā’ī and Abū Hāshim Jubbā’ī and believes in the createdness of the Qurʾān and says that “the Qurʾān is the speech of God and His revelation (*waḥy*), it is created (*makhlūq*), and temporal (*muḥdath*). God sent it down to his Prophet so that it could be knowledge and evidence of (Muḥammad’s) prophethood. He made it an evidentiary proof (*dalāla*) so that we

⁶⁴ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 30.

⁶⁵ Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 598–99.

⁶⁶ Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 584–85; van Ess, “Ibn Kullāb,” *ET² Supplement*, 12: 391–92.

⁶⁷ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 54–55; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 7:3–5.

could have rules and regulations to which we could refer regarding the prescribed and prohibited activities. It is incumbent upon us to praise, thank and sanctify (God). And the Qur'ān is that which we hear and recite today. If it is not created by God (at the present moment) it is attributed to Him in reality, just as we recite the poetry of Imru' al-Qays⁶⁸ today in reality, even though he is not composing it now."⁶⁹

Al-Ash'arī considers that the divine speech, like God's attributes, subsists in His divine essence (*ṣifāt al-dhāt*) and is not subject to temporal origination. He distinguishes between the inner speech (*al-kalām al-naḥsī*) and outward or originated speech (*al-kalām al-ḥādīth*). He states that eternal divine speech, like eternal divine power or knowledge remains in itself one and indivisible. Therefore, in the Qur'ān, no distinction can be made between verses that refer to events in the past and those in the future, because it constitutes an eternal act of information covering all different temporal events equally.⁷⁰ According to Ibn Fūrak, al-Ash'arī's view regarding God's speech is that, "It is a command in itself just as it is speech in itself (*amrun li-naḥsihi kamā annahu kalām li-naḥsihi*). Similarly, God's word in all descriptions of the speech in reality is prohibition (*naḥiyyan*), narration (*khāḥḥan*), promise (*wa'dan*), threat (*wa'idan*) and remembrance (*dhikran*) in all He is attributed with.⁷¹ In his illustration of al-Ash'arī's concept of the unity of the divine speech, al-Shahrastānī states that the words revealed by the angels to the prophets constitute an indication (*dalāla*) of the eternal speech, with such evidence being a created and originated thing but that which is indicated (*madlūl*) is pre-existent and eternal.⁷² To conclude, against the views of the Mu'tazilites that the Qur'ān was created, al-Ash'arī maintained that it was God's speech, an eternal attribute, and therefore uncreated.

Al-Zamakhsharī, like most Mu'tazilites, believes that the Qur'ān was created. According to him, the interpretation of the verse: "We have made it an Arabic

68 Imru' al-Qays is a pre-Islamic poet who may have died circa 550 A.D. His poems were collected towards the end of second/eighth century and two definitive recensions were established during the third/ninth century. He is admired for the ingenuity of his metaphors and his concise and skillful treatment of various traditional forms and poetic themes. Also, he is considered to be the creator of the classical form of the *qaṣīda*. See S. Boustani, "Imru' al-Qays b. Ḥudjir," *ET*², 3: 1176.

69 In his supercommentary on 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. Abi Ḥāshim, known as Mānkdim (d. 425/1034), says that 'Abd al-Jabbār classified the dispute about the createdness of the Qur'ān under the principle of divine justice (*al-'adl*), one of the five principles of the Mu'tazilite doctrine, because the Qur'ān is one of God's acts. See 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 527–29.

70 Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 65; Anvari, "al-Ash'arī," *EIs*, 3: 833–59.

71 Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 58; Anvari, "al-Ash'arī," *EIs*, 3: 833–59.

72 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 68.

Qur'ān that perchance you may understand" (*inna ja'alnāhu Qur'ānan 'arabiyyan la'allakum ta'qilūn*) is that "We have created it in Arabic not in foreign language" (*khalāqnāhu 'arabiyyan ghayra a'jamī*).⁷³ He further states that it is in Arabic so that the people may not say that is why its verses have not been elaborated.⁷⁴

His view is so emphatic that he mentions in the preface of *al-Kashshāf* that God is far above to transmit it (the Qur'ān) from the beginning and eternity, and He marked the occurrence of everything from nonexistence.⁷⁵ Hence, it is not God's essence and does not exist from eternity rather it is an incident of phenomena and created.

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the verse: "Say: 'Were men and jinn to get together to produce the like of this (Qur'ān), they will never come up with the like of it, even if they back up one another'" (*qul la 'inijtam'ati al-insu wal-jinnu 'alā an ya'tū bi-mithli hadhā al-Qur'āni lā ya'tūna bi-mithlihi wa law kāna ba'ḍuhum li-ba'ḍin ṣāhira*),⁷⁶ that the Qur'ān claims that its likeness in its eloquence, excellent composition and compilation could never be produced by anyone.⁷⁷ He also states that the Nawābit⁷⁸ claim that the Qur'ān is eternal (*qadīm*) and admit that it is miraculous (*mu'jiz*). He argues against it and explains that "inability" (*'ajz*) is opposite to "capability" (*qudra*). It is said that "God is powerful in His creation of substance and the human beings are not capable of this" (*Allāh qādirun 'alā khalq al al-ajsām wa al-'ibād ājizūna 'anhu*). So far as the "impossibility" (*al-maḥāl*) is concerned, there is neither any possibility in it for its capability nor any interference in it "like the (existence of) second eternity" (*ka-thānī al-qadīm*). It is not said about a person who can perform that "he/she is unable to perform and he/she is not miraculous" (*qad 'ajaza 'anhu wa-lā huwa mu'jiz*). Those who are obstinate, they describe God with incapability because He does not have power over impossibility. But it is wrong because "He is powerful over impossibility" (*huwa qādirun 'alā al-maḥāl*) and it is His attribute.⁷⁹ He concludes that the Qur'ān did not exist from eternity.

⁷³ Qur'ān, 43:3; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 424–25.

⁷⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 424–25.

⁷⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:95.

⁷⁶ Qur'ān, 17: 88.

⁷⁷ There are five verses in the Qur'ān which describe it and these are called as "challenge verses" (*āyāt al-taḥaddī*). These are: 2: 23–24; 10: 38; 11: 13; 17: 88 and 52: 34.

⁷⁸ *Nawābit* (sing. *nābita*) means rising generation, but acquired the pejorative sense of bad lot or rogue. Ibn al-Nadīm devotes in his *al-Fihrist* a section to the *mutakallimūn al-mujbira* and the *nābitat al-ḥashwiyya*, amongst whom the main exponent was Ibn Kullāb. Al-Zamakhsharī specifically mentions in his *Asās al-balāgha* that the *nābita/nawābit* is Ḥashwiyya. See Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 313–16; Ch. Pellat, "Nābita," *El²*, 7: 843.

⁷⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:550–51.

The Qur'ān mentions how God speaks with the human beings: "It is not to any human being that God should speak to him except by revelation or from behind a veil, or that He sends a messenger to reveal by His permission whatsoever He pleases." (*wa mā kāna li-basharin an yukallimahu Allāhu illā waḥyan aw min warā'ī ḥijābin aw yursila rasūlan fayuḥiya bi-idninhi mā yashā*).⁸⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī interprets that there are three methods in which God communicates with the people. First, He communicates through revelation (*waḥy*) which may be in the form of inspiration (*ilhām*) or in the form of putting it in the heart of a person during his sleep or dream, as He revealed to Abrāham and the mother of Moses. Second, one may hear His speech (*kalām*) created in some form where a listener can hear without seeing Him, "because He is invisible in His essence" (*li annahu fī dhātihi ghayr mar'ī*). He cites an example of a king who speaks from behind a veil with his special audience who can hear him but cannot see him. He says that it was in this manner that God spoke to Moses and speaks with the angels. Third, He sends messengers from amongst the angels to convey His commands to the prophets, so it is revelation through the angels. Since the first and third methods are in accord with the Mu'tazilites principles, he elaborates on them. So far as the second method is concerned, he says that it is a figurative speech (*tamthīl*) otherwise the form of the speech is the same that God creates it in some form.⁸¹ Al-Zamakhsharī's view regarding the createdness of the Qur'ān is so emphatic that he mentions in the preface of *al-Kashshāf* that "He (God) is far above to transmit it (the Qur'ān) from the beginning and eternity, and He marked the occurrence of everything from nonexistence (*fa-subḥāna man ista'thara bi-al-awwaliya wa-al-qidam wa-wasama kulli shay'in sawāhu bi-al-ḥudūth 'an al-'adam*)."⁸² Therefore, according to al-Zamakhsharī, the Qur'ān is not God's essence and does not exist from eternity rather it is an incident of phenomena and created.

3 Anthropomorphism and Transcendence (*tashbīh wa tanzīh*)

Anthropomorphism (*tashbīh* literally 'comparison') and the affirmation of transcendence (*tanzīh* literally 'purification') in Islamic theology are used in the context of describing God. According to Josef van Ess,

⁸⁰ Qur'ān, 42: 51.

⁸¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 420 – 22.

⁸² Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 95.

tanzīh has a positive connotation whereas *tashbīh*, together with its derivatives *mushabbih* and *mushabbihā* (denoting a person or a group practising *tashbīh*), is used in polemical language, as a derogatory term. The negative equivalent of *tanzīh* is *taʿīl*, divesting God of His attributes; as the positive pendant to *tashbīh*, *ithbāt* is sometimes used, the affirmation of the divine attributes by analogy.⁸³

The Qurʾān describes God as transcendent who is different from all existing things. “There is no other like Him” (*laysa kamithlihi shayʾ*),⁸⁴ “And there is no one comparable to Him” (*wa-lam yakun lahu kufuwan aḥad*).⁸⁵ However, there are anthropomorphic expressions in the Qurʾān such as God’s hands, eyes, face, divine actions associated with God’s body such as seeing, hearing, speaking, coming and sitting on the throne. Also, the Qurʾān ascribes to God human feelings such as mercy, anger and satisfaction. There are also *ḥadīths* which state that “God created Adam in His image” (*inna Allāh khalaqa Ādam ʿalā ṣūratihī*) and “The believer’s heart is between two of God’s fingers” (*qalb al-muʾmin bayna iṣbaʿayn min aṣābiʿ al-Raḥmān*).⁸⁶

The early traditionalists’ viewpoint was to accept the anthropomorphic accounts literally. They did not interpret anthropomorphic expressions metaphorically. Muqātil b. Sulaymān and Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/796) were of the opinion that “We believe in what is mentioned in the Book and the traditions and we do not interpret the text” (*nuʾminu bimā warada bihi al-kitābu wa al-sunna wa lā nataʿarraḍu lil-taʿwīl*).⁸⁷ Sufyān b. ʿUyayna (d. 196/811) emphasized the prohibition on interpreting the anthropomorphic descriptions in the Qurʾān.⁸⁸ According to Abī Bakr Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq Ibn Khuzayma, they called their conviction “affirmation” (*ithbāt*), and considered themselves “the people who affirm [God’s attributes]” (*ahl al-ithbāt*). Their main argument was that God has described Himself like this. If these accounts are not accepted it would be tantamount to the rejection of God’s own description of Himself in the Qurʾān and *ḥadīth*.⁸⁹

⁸³ J. van Ess, “Tashbīh wa Tanzīh,” *ET*, 10: 341–44.

⁸⁴ Qurʾān, 42: 11.

⁸⁵ Qurʾān, 112: 4.

⁸⁶ Al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, 73–76; Montgomery Watt, “Created in His Image: A Study in Islamic Theology,” in Montgomery Watt’s *Early Islam: Collected articles* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990), 94–100.

⁸⁷ Al-Shahrastānī, *Mīlāl*, 1: 76.

⁸⁸ Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAlī Al-Bayhaqī, *Kitāb al-Asmāʾ wa al-ṣifāt*, ed. Muḥammad Zāhid al-Kawtharī (Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1980), 314.

⁸⁹ Abī Bakr Muḥammad b. Iṣḥāq Ibn Khuzayma, *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd wa-ithbāt ṣifāt al-Rabb ʿazza wa-jalla*, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Ibrāhīm al-Shahwān (Riyāḍ, Dār al-Rushd, 1988), 1: 24–27.

Among the early theologians who argued against anthropomorphism were Ja'd b. Dirham and Jahm b. Šafwān. Jahm said that: "It is not possible to describe the Creator by an attribute by which His creatures are described because this would be like comparing God to His creatures" (*lā yajūza an yūšafa al-bārī ta'āla bi-ṣifati yūšafa bihā khalqahu li-anna dhālika yaqḍi tashbihan*).⁹⁰ Al-Ash'arī quotes Jahm and some of the Zaydites saying that "the Creator cannot be described as a thing because a created thing has a similarity to other created things" (*inna al-bārī lā yuqāla innahu shay'un li-anna al-shay'i huwa al-makhlūq al-ladhī lahu mithlu*).⁹¹

The Mu'tazilites stressed absolute uniqueness and transcendence of God and denied His description anthropomorphically in any form, such as direction, place, image, body, face, hand, eye, domain, movement, extinction, change, or feeling.⁹² The Mu'tazilites considered the anthropomorphic verses in the Qur'ān as allegorical or figurative expressions to symbolize God's attributes and actions. They dealt with such verses by the method of *ta'wīl* or metaphorical interpretation. They interpreted single words in a Qur'ānic text according to a secondary or metaphorical meaning found elsewhere in the Qur'ān.⁹³ By the "hand" (*yad*)⁹⁴ is meant God's blessing (*ni'ma*),⁹⁵ and by His "eye" (*ayn*)⁹⁶ is meant His knowledge (*'ilm*).⁹⁷ His "face" (*wajh*)⁹⁸ means God's very essence.⁹⁹ God's sitting on the throne¹⁰⁰ is a symbol of His authority, power and control upon everything.¹⁰¹

Al-Shahrastānī states that al-Ash'arī followed *ahl al-ithbāt*, affirming divine attributes as described in the Qur'ān, without using *ta'wīl*, though later he ascribed to *ta'wīl*.¹⁰² According to George Makdisi,

90 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 60.

91 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 181.

92 Schmidkte, *Mu'tazilite Creed of az-Zamaḥṣarī*, 16–18.

93 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 224–30.

94 Qur'ān, 3: 26,73; 5: 64; 23: 88; 36: 83; 38: 75; 48: 10; 57: 29; 67: 1.

95 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 167, 218.

96 Qur'ān, 11: 37; 20: 39; 23: 27; 52: 48; 54: 14.

97 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 165, 195.

98 Qur'ān, 28:88; 55:27.

99 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 521.

100 Qur'ān, 7: 54; 10: 3; 13: 2; 20: 5; 25: 59; 32: 4; 57: 4.

101 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 211.

102 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 72–73.

This makes Ash'arī¹⁰³ the follower of *two middle roads*: (1) that of the Pious Ancestors who were anxious to avoid two extremes: *ta'wīl* and *tashbīh*; and (2) that of the “*kalām*-using orthodox” who wanted to uphold the divine attributes, against the Mu'tazilites, and uphold the use of *ta'wīl* in order to avoid falling into *tashbīh*. The former attitude is regarded by the Ash'arites as being *ṭarīq as-salāma*, the road of salvation, and the latter is regarded by them as being *ṭarīq al-ḥikma*, the road of wisdom; both of which were travelled by Ash'arī himself.¹⁰⁴

Al-Ash'arī adopted the method of *bi-lā kayfa* for the literal understanding of anthropomorphic statements in the Qur'ān. Binyamin Abrahamov states that,

According to this method, one should adhere to the sacred text of the Qur'ān and believe that it is the truth without trying to explain it through figurative interpretation. Asked how God, who is incorporeal, has face and hands, man must answer ‘God has hands *bi-lā kayfa*,’ i.e., without asking how or giving commentary. Moreover, the question *kayfa* applies to corporeal characteristics, therefore the statement ‘God has hands’ with the addition of the denial of *kayfa* means to accept this statement without attributing corporeal qualities to God.¹⁰⁵

Al-Ash'arī does not agree with the Mu'tazilites that the anthropomorphic verses in the Qur'ān are allegorical or figurative expressions to symbolize God's attributes and actions. He states that the literal meaning of a verse should not be replaced by a figurative meaning unless there is proof which necessitate such a change.¹⁰⁶ According to him, there are certain attributes of God which cannot be described rationally, but are mentioned in the Qur'ān and authentic traditions, such as God's sitting upon the throne, His hands, face, side and eyes. In his opinion, it is necessary to believe that God possesses these attributes, but only in a manner conforming to the transcendence of His essence. When

103 According to George Makdisi, Ash'arite propagandists have presented us with an Ash'arī who was first a thorough-going rationalist, who then became a thorough-going traditionalist, and who finally became a traditionalist keeping the rationalist method by adopting *kalām*. See George Makdisi, “Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History,” *Studia Islamica* 18 (1963), 22.

104 George Makdisi, “Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic Religious History,” *Studia Islamica* 17 (1962), 52.

105 Binyamin Abrahamov, *Anthropomorphism and Interpretation of the Qur'ān in the Theology of al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm: Kitāb al-Mustarshid* (Leiden, New York, Köln: Brill, 1996), 6; Binyamin Abrahamov, “The ‘*Bi-la Kayfa*’ Doctrine and Its Foundation in Islamic Theology,” *Arabica*, 42 (1995):365–79; Richard M. Frank, “Elements in the Development of the Teaching of al-Ash'arī,” *Le Muséon* 104 (1991), 155–60.

106 Abū al-Ḥasan 'Alī b. Ismā'il al-Ash'arī, *al-Ibāna 'an uṣūl al-diyāna* (Miṣr: Idāra al-Ṭib'a al-Muniriyya, 1929), 37–41.

they are referred to God's essence they indicate only a quality (*nu't*) and attribute (*ṣifa*).¹⁰⁷

Al-Ash'arī's position regarding these attributes is midway between the positions of the Mu'tazilites and the anthropomorphists (*al-mushabbihā*). Ibn Fūrak mentions that al-Ash'arī was of the view that the description of such terms could be ascertained through traditions, whereas their meanings could only be known through reason. However, he was cautious that one should not go too deep for a rational explanation into the meanings of these attributes, and affirm belief in the attributes "without asking how" (*bi-lā kayfa*).¹⁰⁸

The Mu'tazilites consider the anthropomorphic verses in the Qur'ān as allegorical or figurative expressions to symbolize God's attributes and actions. Al-Zamakhsharī deals with such verses by the method of *ta'wīl* or metaphorical interpretation. He interprets single words in a Qur'ānic text according to a secondary or metaphorical meaning found elsewhere in the Qur'ān. His main emphasis is to avoid literal meanings and illustrate in conformity with the Mu'tazilites principles.

4 Vision of God (*ru'yat Allāh*)

The Qur'ān does not explicitly and specifically mention about the "vision of God" (*ru'yat Allāh*) except at one place where it states that: "On that Day, faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord" (*wujūhun yawma'izin nāḍirātun ilā rabbihā nāẓirātun*).¹⁰⁹ However, *ḥadīth* narratives mention the Prophet Muḥammad's Night journey (*isrā'*) and Ascension (*mi'rāj*) when he had an experience of God's vision.¹¹⁰ The Muslim theologians are divided in this matter whether the *isrā'* and *mi'rāj* happened while Muḥammad was asleep or awake and whether it was his spirit or his body in which he journeyed. The orthodox opin-

¹⁰⁷ Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 22–23, 41.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 211, 290.

¹⁰⁹ Qur'ān, 75: 22–23.

¹¹⁰ Verse 17: 1 mentions that, "Glory to Him who who took His servant to journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Distant Mosque whose precincts We have blessed. Verses 53: 8–18 mention that, "When he was on the highest horizon; then, he came closer and closer; until a space of two bows or even less. Then He revealed to His servant what He revealed. His hearing did not deny what he perceived. Do you dispute with him concerning what he saw? He saw Him indeed another time by the Lotus tree beyond which none can pass; close to it is the Garden of Refuge. When the Lotus tree was covered over with what it was covered over; neither did sight falter nor exceeded the bounds. Indeed, he saw some of the greatest signs of his Lord."

ion is that the journey was performed by Muḥammad with his body and awake. The rationalists say that it took place in a dream when he was asleep. Another verse mentioning “meeting with Lord” (*liqā' rabbihi*) is also quoted in support of God's vision.¹¹¹

The Mu'tazilites differ about the “vision of God” (*ru'yat Allāh*). They have nineteen conflicting opinions and the majority of them deny seeing God in this world as well as in the hereafter. Basing themselves on their cosmology and their understanding of the nature of God, they argue that in order to be seen, a thing must be either substance or accident, and God is neither a substance, nor an accident, nor a material object, nor a substrate. God cannot be perceived by the senses, i.e., He is imperceptible. They quote that: “Perception cannot grasp Him” (*lā tudrikuhu al-abṣār*).¹¹² But the Qur'ān also states that: “On that Day, faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord” (*wujūhun yawma'izīn nāḍiratun ilā rabbiḥā nāḍiratun*).¹¹³ The Mu'tazilites interpret *nāḍara* as “to wait” instead of “to look upon.” Furthermore, the proper complement of *nāḍiratun* is not *rabiḥā*, but an implied word, *thawāb*, so they understand the real meaning of the verse to be “waiting for the reward of their Lord.”¹¹⁴

However, some of the Mu'tazilites are of the view that one can attain the vision of God. Abū al-Hudhayl believed that God can be seen through heart, but al-Fuwaṭī and Ibn 'Abbād disagreed with him. Ḍirār b. 'Amr and Ḥaṣṣ al-Fard held that on the Day of Resurrection God will create in man a sixth sense capable of perceiving Him. Others said that: “We can see God in this world in dream, not when awake” (*innā nara Allāh fī al-dunyā fī al-nawm fa-ammā fī al-yaqza falā*). The companions of 'Abd al-Wāhid b. Zayd narrated that God can be seen depending upon the good deeds, whosoever has excellent deeds can see Him the best.¹¹⁵

Al-Ash'arī states that according to the Qur'ān believers will see God with their eyes. He stipulates various conditions which would necessarily invalidate the possibility of seeing God, such as the supposition that He would be confined within a particular place or time. He concludes that if a description (*waṣf*) does not necessitate any of the following conditions, then the vision of God is possible from a purely rational point of view. These conditions are: if it does not imply attributing to God any temporal origination (*ḥadath*); if it does not require the

111 Verse 18: 110: “Whosoever hopes to meet His Lord (*liqā' rabbihi*) should do what is good and do not associate anyone in the worship of his Lord” is quoted in support of God's vision.

112 Qur'ān, 6: 103.

113 Qur'ān, 75: 22–23.

114 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamṣa*, 245; al-Ash'arī, *al-Luma'*, 35.

115 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 213–17.

positing of similarity (*tashbīh*) of God; if it does not imply any fundamental alteration in His essence; and if it does not ascribe to Him any paronomasia (*tajnīs*) or oppression (*tajwīr*) or injustice (*taẓlīm*) or deceit (*takdhīb*).¹¹⁶ Al-Ash‘arī identifies existence (*wujūd*) as being the only essential condition for vision.¹¹⁷

Al-Ash‘arī admits that vision requires directionality, and when God is seen, this must also apply to Him. However, according to him, such directionality must be applied figuratively in relation to God. He also examines evidence from the Qur‘ān and elaborates certain verses pertaining to the vision of God, and denies that such vision is exclusively metaphorical (*majāzī*). In other words, verses which describe about seeing God are to be taken literally. He states that the verse: “Vision cannot penetrate Him, but He penetrates all visions” (*lā tudrikhu al-abṣār wa huwa yudriku al-abṣār*),¹¹⁸ refers that God cannot be seen in this world. However, based on the certain Qur‘ānic verses,¹¹⁹ the believers will have a vision of God in the hereafter.¹²⁰

It is important to present the views of al-Ṭabarī on this issue. Al-Lālakā‘ī Abī al-Qāsim Hibat Allāh b. al-Ḥasan b. Maṣṣūr al-Ṭabarī (d. 418/1027), in his book *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-i‘tiqād ahl al-sunna wa al-jamā‘a*, assembled the views on the vision of God on the day of resurrection, among the articles of faith (*i‘tiqād* or *‘aqīda*) of eleven predecessors. He found it as an article of creed in Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855), Abū Zur‘a al-Rāzī (d. 264/878), Abū Ḥātim al Rāzī (d. 277/890), and Abū Ja‘far al-Ṭabarī. The vision of God was also mentioned as an article of faith by Abū Ḥanīfa (d. 150/767). ‘Alī b. al-Madīnī (d. 234/849 or 235/850), in his creed mentions that, God will speak to humans on the day of judgement. It is also found in Ibn Ḥanbal’s creed, in addition to the vision of God.

It is interesting to note that al-Lālakā‘ī included al-Ṭabarī, not his contemporary Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash‘arī in his list of predecessors. Several reasons can be cited for his choice of al-Ṭabarī. First, his creed had a long history of development on the vision of God, and he entered into debates with Jahmites and Mu‘tazilites. Second, he was considered one of the masters of Sunnites among the Baghdādīs. Third, he was one of the most important and famous Sunnī exegetes of the Qur‘ān.

116 Al-Ash‘arī, *al-Luma’*, 32–36.

117 Abū al-Faṭḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *The Summa Philosophiae of Shahrastānī Kitāb Nihāyat al-‘iqdām fī ‘ilmi ‘l-kalām*, ed. Alfred Guillaume. (London – Humphrey Milford: Oxford University Press, 1934), 365.

118 Qur‘ān, 6: 103.

119 Qur‘ān, 75: 22–23.

120 Al-Ash‘arī, *al-Luma’*, 32–36; al-Asha‘rī, *al-Ibāna*, 13–18.

Al-Ṭabarī mentions five different interpretations of the verse: “Vision cannot penetrate Him, but He penetrates all visions” (*lā tudrikhu al-abṣār wa huwa yudriku al-abṣār*).¹²¹

First, some of the exegetes are of the opinion that He cannot be comprehended by vision, but He perceives everyone. Ibn ‘Abbās said that sight of any human beings cannot grasp His supreme authority. Qatāda said that God is too great to be perceived by the eyes. According to ‘Aṭīyya al-‘Awfī “Looking towards God” (*yanẓurūna ilā Allāh*) means that their eyes will not be able to see God due to “His exaltedness,” and they will be encircled by His vision. Al-Ṭabarī differentiates between the meanings of “seeing” (*ru'ya*) and “comprehension” (*idrāk*). The meaning of “comprehension” (*idrāk*) is “full grasp” (*iḥāṭah*). It is in this sense that Ibn ‘Abbās, Qatāda and ‘Aṭīyya al-‘Awfī hold their views.

God mentions in the Qur’ān that the faces will be looking at their Lord on the Day of Judgment and the Prophet stated that his people would see their Lord on the Day of Judgment as the full moon is seen at night and as the sun is seen when there are no clouds. The Prophet’s traditions confirm the interpretation of “On that Day, faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord” (*wujūhun yawma’izin nāḍirātun ilā rabbihā nāẓirātun*),¹²² that the eyes will perceive God Exalted, and the Book of God substantiates it.

Second, other exegetes are of the opinion that the meaning of “comprehension” (*idrāk*) is “seeing” (*ru'ya*), that is, eyes do not see Him but He sees eyes. Al-Ṭabarī cites traditions narrated by al-Suddī and ‘Ā’isha in favor of this interpretation. Al-Suddī states that no one can see Him, but He sees the creation. According to ‘Ā’isha, whosoever says that the Prophet saw God, he lied because “Vision cannot penetrate Him, but He penetrates all visions” (*lā tudrikhu al-abṣār wa huwa yudriku al-abṣār*),¹²³ and “It is not given to man that God should speak to him, except by revelation or from behind a veil” (*wa-mā kāna li-basharin an yukallimahu Allāhu illā waḥyan aw min warā’i ḥijāb*).¹²⁴ However, he saw Gabriel in his image twice. In another tradition, ‘Ā’isha narrated that, if anyone said that he saw his Lord, it was a great falsehood upon God.

Those who mean by “comprehension” (*idrāk*), “seeing” (*ru'ya*), deny that God can be seen by eyes, either in this world or in the hereafter. They interpret the verses: “On that Day, faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord” (*wujū-*

¹²¹ Qur’ān, 6: 103.

¹²² Qur’ān, 75: 22–23.

¹²³ Qur’ān, 6: 103.

¹²⁴ Qur’ān, 42: 51.

hun yawma'izin nāḍiratun ilā rabbihā nāḍiratun),¹²⁵ in the sense of waiting for God's mercy and reward (for good deeds).

Al-Ṭabarī does not name the Mu'tazilites, but it is known that this was their interpretation. They deny the sound traditions of the Prophet on the vision of God by the people of paradise, and rely upon their intellect in such matters and consider that rationally the vision of God by sight is impossible. Al-Ṭabarī summarizes their rational arguments and concludes that these are their fallacies (*tamwihāt*) and deductions (*istikhrājāt*).

Third, "comprehension" (*idrāk*) is understood as a "vision" (*ru'ya*) of God. Here, the meaning of the verse is not general, but a special one. The vision of people in this world cannot manage to see God, but will be able to see Him in the hereafter, as God states: "On that Day, faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord" (*wujūhun yawma'izin nāḍiratun ilā rabbihā nāḍiratun*).¹²⁶ This represents an exception expressed by God.

Fourth, others are of the opinion that this verse must be understood in a special context not in a general sense (*'alā al-khuṣūṣ lā 'alā al-'umūm*). First, "the transgressors" (*al-ḡalīmīn*) will not see God in this world as well as in the hereafter, but the believers and friends of God will see Him. Second, the sight cannot perceive Him in its entirety and comprehension (*bi al-nihāya wa al-iḥāṭa*). Third, they cannot see Him in this world, but in the hereafter. Fourth, they do not see Him as the Lord sees His creation.

Fifth, some say that the literal meaning of this verse is that God cannot be perceived by human beings in this world as well as in the hereafter. However, God will create a sixth sense, other than their five senses, for His friends on the Day of Judgment and they will see Him by this sense.

According to al-Ṭabarī, the preferable opinion is the first one, which states that God cannot be perceived in this world but in the hereafter. The Prophet said that: "You will see your Lord on the Day of Judgment, like you see the full moon at night and like you see the sun when there are no clouds." The unbelievers will be screened off from seeing Him, as God says that, "Surely, they will be screened off from their Lord on that day" (*kallā innahum 'an rabbihim yawma'izin lamahjūbūn*).¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Qur'ān, 75: 22–23.

¹²⁶ Qur'ān, 75: 22–23.

¹²⁷ Qur'ān, 83: 15; Abī Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl ay al-Qur'ān* (Miṣr: Shirka Maktaba wa Maṭba' Muṣṭafā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1954–1968), 7: 299–304; Abī Ja'far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *al-Tabṣīr fī ma'ālim al-dīn*, ed. Alī b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (Riyāḍ: Dār al-'Aṣima lil-Nashr wa al-Tawzī', 1996), 147–48, 215–225; Abī al-Qāsim Hibat Allāh b. al-Ḥasan b. Manṣūr al-Ṭabarī al-Lālakā'i, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-i'tiqād ahl al-sunna wa al-jamā'a*, ed. Abū Ya'qūb Na-

With regard to verses 75:22–23: “On that Day, faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord” (*wujūhun yawma'izin nāḍīratun ilā rabbihā nāẓīratun*), exegetes differ in their interpretation.

In verse 75:22, “radiant” (*nāḍīratun*) means “excellent” (*ḥasana*); “blissful” (*nā'ima*); and “pleased” (*masrūr*). According to Mujāhid, “radiant faces” (*wujūhun nāḍīratun*) will be “due to the delight, the felicity and the exultation” (*min al-surūr wa al-na'im wa al-ghibṭa*). According to 'Ikramah, in verse 75:23, “Looking upon their Lord” (*ilā rabbihā nāẓīratun*) means “to look at Lord with eyes” (*tanẓur ilā rabbihā naẓran*). Al-Ḥasan states that, it means “to look at the Creator” (*tanẓur ilā al-khāiq*). Mujāhid interprets it “waiting for His sustenance, and His grace” (*tantazir rizqihi wa faḍlihi*). Others say that it means “waiting for the reward” (*tantazir al-thawāb*).

Al-Ṭabarī is of the opinion that the right interpretation of this verse is that of al-Ḥasan and 'Ikramah, that is, “looking at their Creator” (*tanẓur ilā al-khāliq-ha*).¹²⁸

Abū al-Faṭḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī's (d. 548/1153) views regarding the vision of God can be found in his Qur'ān commentary, *Mafātīḥ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār*,¹²⁹ and in *Kitāb Nihāyatu 'l-iqdām fī 'ilmi 'l-kalām*.

In *Mafātīḥ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār*, al-Shahrastānī interprets the words *al-alif* (a), *al-lām* (l) and *al-hā* (h) of *ilāh*, as God's identification (*ta'rīf*), His sovereignty (*tamlīk*), and His affirmation of thingness (*shay'*) respectively. “He is the one who cannot be grasped” (*huwa huwa lā yudrik*) and “He is the one who is everything which cannot be denied” (*huwa min ḥaythu lahu kulli shay' lā yunkir*).

shā't b. Kamāl al-Maṣrī (Cairo: al-Maktabat al-Islāmiyya, 2003), 1: 245–301, 2: 120–210; Claude Gilliot, “La vision de Dieu dans l'au-delà. Exégèse, tradition et théologie en Isam,” in [*Mélanges Tardieu*] Amir-Moezzi (Mohammed Ali), J.-D. Dubois, C. Jullien et F. Jullien (sous la direction de), *Pensée grecque et sagesse d'Orient*. Hommage à Michel Tardieu, Turnhout, Brepols (Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études. Sciences religieuses, 142), 2009, 244–45, 256–64; Claude Gilliot, *Exégèse, Langue, et Théologie en Islam: L'exégèse coranique de Ṭabarī (m. 311/923)*, (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1990), 245–49.

¹²⁸ Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 29: 191–93.

¹²⁹ Al-Shahrastānī's commentary covers only the first two chapters of the Qur'ān, *Sūra al-Fātiḥa* and *Sūra al-Baqara*. In general, he interprets each verse under the following headings: “lexicography” (*luḡha*), “linguistic coinage” (*wad'*), “etymology” (*ishtiḳāq*), “grammar” (*naḥw*), “harmonious order” (*naẓm*), “exegesis” (*tafsīr*), “semantics” (*ma'ānī*), and “mysteries” (*asrār*). See: Abū al-Faṭḥ Tāj al-Dīn Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Karīm al-Shahrastānī, *Mafātīḥ al-asrār wa-maṣābīḥ al-abrār*, ed. Muḥammad 'Alī Ādharshab (Tehran: Mirāth-i Maktūb, 2008), 2:13; Toby Mayer, Shahrastānī on the Acrana of the Qur'ān: A Preliminary Evaluation. *Journal of Qur'anic Studies*, 7 (2005), 83.

He states that it points to God's attributes of "majesty" (*jalāl*) and beneficence (*ikrām*).¹³⁰ He elaborates the significance of these two attributes as follows: He is veiled from them through His majesty, so they may not perceive Him, and He manifests Himself to them through His bounty, so they may not deny Him (*iḥ-tajaba 'anhum bi-jalālihi fa-lam yudrikūhu wa tajallā lahum bi-ikrāmihi fa-lam yunkirūhu*). Al-Shahrastānī quotes 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib's statement in support of his interpretation: "God, Exalted is too mighty to be seen, yet too manifest to be hidden" (*inna Allāha ta'ālā 'azza min an yurā wa aẓhara min an yukhfā*).¹³¹

In *Kitāb Nihāyatu 'l-iqdām fī 'ilmi 'l-kalām*, al-Shahrastānī mentions the views of the Mu'tazilites and al-Ash'arī regarding the vision of God in detail, and concludes that the Mu'tazilites categorically deny it, whereas al-Ash'arī asserts that it is possible and must be believed. Al-Shahrastānī states that there is no doubt in the vision of God based on the scriptural authority (*sam'iyya*). So far as the possibility of the vision of God from rational perspective is concerned, there are difficulties found in answering some of the problems. One cannot be completely satisfied until the rational considerations address it satisfactorily to resolve inconsistencies. Similarly, the most important task is to provide "more forceful evidence" (*aqwa al-adilla*) regarding the vision of God based on the scriptural authority. For instance, narratives of Moses can be expressed with more reliable sources to prove the vision of God.¹³²

The majority of the Mu'tazilites denies the "vision of God" (*ru'yat Allāh*) in this world as well as in the hereafter. They argue that in order to be seen, a thing must be either substance or accident, and God is neither a substance, nor an accident, nor a material object, nor a substrate, therefore, God cannot be perceived by the senses. Al-Zamakhsharī maintains the same position as that of the Mu'tazilites and justifies that the vision of God is not possible. It is demonstrated by his interpretation of the following five verses.

First verse: "Vision cannot penetrate Him, but He penetrates all visions" (*lā tudrikhu al-abṣār wa huwa yudrik al-abṣār*).¹³³

Al-Zamakhsharī defines the "vision" (*baṣar*) as "the subtle substance" (*al-jawhr al-laṭīf*) which is conveyed by God to the sense of perception (*ḥāssat al-naẓar*) by which all the perceived things can be penetrated. It means that the vision has neither any linkage with Him nor can it perceive Him because He is the

¹³⁰ Qur'ān, 55: 26–27. All that is on earth will perish, but the face of your Lord, full of majesty and beneficence will abide (*kullu man 'alayhā fān wa yabqā wajhu rabbika dhu 'l-jalāli wa 'l-ikrām*).

¹³¹ Al-Shahrastānī, *Mafātiḥ al-asrār*, 1: 78, 90.

¹³² Al-Shahrastānī, *Summa Philosophiae of Shahrastānī Kitāb Nihāyatu 'l-iqdām*, 356–69.

¹³³ Qur'ān, 6: 103.

supreme being (*muta'āl*) who cannot be penetrated in His essence. The vision has linkage with those things which comprise sides or directions, primary or secondary, like bodies and forms. Since God is neither a body nor a form, vision cannot penetrate Him.¹³⁴

Second verse: “He (Moses) said: ‘O Lord, reveal to me Yourself so that I may see You.’ He said: ‘You cannot see Me, but look at the mountain. If it remains firm in its place you may then see Me.’ When his Lord revealed Himself on the mountain, He leveled it to ground, and Moses fell down unconscious. When he woke up, he said: ‘All glory to You. I turn to You in repentance, and I am the first to believe.’” (*wa-lammā jā'a Musā li-mīqatinā wa kallamahu rabbuhu qāla arinī anẓur ilayk qāla lan tarānī wa-lākin unẓur ilā al-jabali fa-insastaqarra makānahu fa-sawfa tarānī fa-lmmā tajallā rabbuhu lil-jabali ja'alahu dakkan wa-kharra Musā ṣa'iqā fa-lammā afāqa qāla subhānaka tubtu ilayka wa-anā awwalul mu'minīn*).¹³⁵

Third verse: Moses chose seventy of his people for the appointment (on Mount Sināi). When the earthquake overtook them, he (Moses) said: “O Lord, had You pleased, You would have destroyed them together with me before this time. Will You destroy us for something the foolish among us have done? This is but a trial from You whereby You will lead whom You will astray and guide whom You please “ (*wa khtāra Mūsā qawmahu sab'īna rajulan li-mīqatinā fa-lammā akhadhat hum al-rajjatu qāla rabbī law sh'ita ahlaktahum min qablu wa 'iyyāy 'atuhlikunā bimā fa'ala al-sufahā'u minnā in hiya illā fitnauk tuḍillu bihā man tashā'u wa tahdī man tashā'*).¹³⁶

When al-Zamakhsharī interprets the verse 7:143, he also refers to the verse 7:155. He mentions that Moses already knew the “vision” of God was impossible. He raises a question that if Moses knew that the vision was not possible, then why did he ask God to reveal Himself so that he may see Him? He responds that Moses admitted before God that his people were foolish and ignorant, but they still insisted that Moses should request God to appear before them. When Moses asked God to reveal Himself to him, He replied that he could never see Him. In this verse (*lan*) is the emphatic negative imperative for everything in the future. Al-Zamakhsharī quotes the following verse “They will never create a fly, even if they get together” (*lan yakhlūqū dhubaban wala-wijtama'ū*).¹³⁷ In this verse also, the emphatic negative imperative (*lan*) has been used to empha-

134 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 382–83.

135 Qur'ān, 7: 143.

136 Qur'ān, 7: 155.

137 Qur'ān, 22: 73.

size that such a task is impossible. So, in the same manner, vision of God is also impossible forever.¹³⁸

God told Moses to look at the mountain, which according to al-Zamakhsharī means that “looking towards Me is impossible” (*anna al-naẓar ilayyī muḥāl*). If the mountain remained firm in its place then he might be able to see Him. When God manifested the power and reverberation of His command and will, the mountain was leveled to ground and Moses fell down unconscious. Al-Zamakhsharī quotes from the Qur’ān that: “The mountains fall to pieces, for they ascribe a son to the Compassionate” (*takādu al-samāwāt yatafaṭṭanna minhu wa tanshaqqu al-arḍ wa takhirru al-jibāl hadda an da’aw li-al-raḥmān walada*)¹³⁹ to prove that the demand for the vision is similar to ascribing a son to God. Therefore, do not ask God for His vision, but look towards the mountain which trembled and fell down. When Moses recovered from his unconsciousness, he repented and asked God for forgiveness.¹⁴⁰

The people said to Moses that they would not believe in him until they see God themselves. He told them that a vision of God was impossible and advised them, rebuked them and refused to do so, but they insisted him to ask God to appear before them. Moses selected seventy people and took them to the Mount Sināī. He requested God to manifest Himself. They were seized by a violent earthquake and were destroyed. Al-Zamakhsharī argues that since Moses himself could not see God, the foolish and ignorant people were far from seeing Him.¹⁴¹

Fourth and fifth verses: “On that Day, faces will be radiant, looking upon their Lord” (*wujūhun yawmaī’dhīn nāḍira ilā rabbihā nāẓira*).¹⁴² Al-Zamakhsharī states that on the Day of Resurrection people would be looking beyond their comprehension at countless things. However, the believers having neither any fear nor any grief will be looking specifically upon their Lord. He interprets “looking upon their Lord” (*ilā rabbihā nāẓiratun*) as “the expectation and the hope” (*al-tawaqqu’ wa-al-rijā*). They will expect “the grace and munificence” (*al-ni’ma wa-al-karāma*) from their Lord as they were not afraid, and hoped from anyone except their Lord in this world.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 211–12.

¹³⁹ Qur’ān, 19: 90–91.

¹⁴⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 501–507.

¹⁴¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 515–17.

¹⁴² Qur’ān, 75: 22–23.

¹⁴³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 269–70.

5 God's Seat (*kursī*)

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the anthropomorphic verses from the Mu'tazilites' point of view. Verse 2:255 states that "His seat (*kursī*)¹⁴⁴ encompasses the heavens and the earth" (*wasi'a kursiyuhu al-samāwat wa-al-arḍ*). He describes four aspects of this verse's interpretation. First, God's seat is not limited to the heavens and the earth in its magnitude and spaciousness, but it is a metaphor for His Exaltedness. In support of his argument, he quotes "They do not esteem God as is rightly due to Him. The whole earth shall be in His grasp and the heavens shall be rolled up in His right hand on the Day of Resurrection" (*wa-mā qadaru Allāh ḥaqqā qadrihi wa al-arḍu jamī'an qabḍatuhu yawm al-qiyāma wa al-samāwāt maṭwiyyātun bi-yamīnihi*).¹⁴⁵ He interprets this verse also in the figurative sense and states that His grasp of earth and rolling up of the heavens in His right hand on the Day of Resurrection expresses His sublimity and power. Second, His knowledge is extensive (*wasi'a 'ilmuhu*) and His knowledge is figuratively called *kursī*, meaning knowledge which encompasses the entire universe. Third, His *kursī* is a symbol of His supreme authority upon everything. Fourth, He created His *kursī*, which is in front of His 'arsh (throne)¹⁴⁶ beneath which are the heavens and the earth and in comparison to 'arsh, it is smaller. According to Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, however, seat (*kursī*) and throne ('arsh) are the same.¹⁴⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the seat (*kursī*) metaphorically (*takhyīl wa tamthīl*) which expresses God's sublimity, supreme authority and vast knowledge.

6 God's Throne ('arsh)

The word 'arsh appears twenty-one times in the Qur'ān with reference to God's throne. When referring the throne to God, the verses either mention the throne itself or use it in a relational epithet to emphasize aspects of God's majesty. The latter category is mentioned referring God as the "Lord of the throne" (*rabb al-'arsh*), "Lord of the glorious throne" (*rabb al-'arsh al-'aẓīm*), "Lord of

¹⁴⁴ Lane defines *kursī* as throne synonymous to *sarīr* meaning a chair. See Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 7: 2605.

¹⁴⁵ Qur'ān, 39: 67.

¹⁴⁶ Lane defines 'arsh as booth or shed or thing constituted for shade. *Al-arsh* is applied to the 'Arsh of God which is not definable. See Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 5: 2000.

¹⁴⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 481–83.

the noble throne” (*rabb al-‘arsh al-karīm*) and “Owner of the throne” (*dhū al-‘arsh*).¹⁴⁸

While interpreting “the Compassionate who is seated on the throne” (*al-raḥ-mān ‘alā al-‘arsh istawā*),¹⁴⁹ al-Zamakhsharī states that in this verse *istawā* has been used metonymically (*kināya*) for God’s sovereignty.¹⁵⁰ In the verse 17:42, “If there were other gods with Him, as they assert, they would surely have sought access to the Lord of the throne” (*law kāna ma‘ahu ālihatun kamā yaqūluna idhan la-abtaghaw ilā dhī al-‘arsh sabīlā*), he interprets *la abtaghaw* (seeking access) in the sense of that they would have demanded His authority, as it happens in this world when kings fight with each other to subdue their opponents and take their thrones. In support of his interpretation he quotes verse 21:22, “Had there been gods apart from God both (the heavens and the earth) would have been despoiled” (*law kāna fī-himā ālihatun illā Allāh la-fasadatā*).¹⁵¹

In the verse in which the queen of Sheba’s throne is described “She has a throne that is magnificent” (*lahā ‘arsh ‘aẓīm*), al-Zamakhsharī compares it with God’s magnificent throne (*rabb al-‘arsh al-‘aẓīm*)¹⁵² and interprets that her throne may be magnificent, but there is a great difference between her throne and God’s magnificent throne. Her throne is among the many thrones which other kings possess, but the “description of God’s magnificent throne is its grandeur” (*waṣf ‘arsh Allāh bi-al-‘aẓm*): glorification with reference to all that is created between the heavens and the earth.¹⁵³

Finally, the following verse says that, “Full of power, well-established (in position) with the Lord and master of the throne” (*dhī quwwatin ‘inda dhī al-‘arsh makīn*).¹⁵⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī interprets this verse with the verses 53:5–6 that “He (Gabriel) is mighty one, possessed of steadfastness” (*shadīd al-quwā dhū mirratin*) who is with the Lord of the throne. It demonstrates his dignity and power. He is obedient to God and among the close and favorite angels who proceed with His command and returns to His judgment.¹⁵⁵

According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350), al-Ṭabarī’s interpretation regarding the throne of God (*‘arsh*) is provided in the following three verses: “The most Merciful established on the throne” (*al-raḥmān ‘alā al-‘arsh*

148 Jamal Elias, “Throne of God,” *EQ*, 5: 276.

149 Qur’ān, 20: 5.

150 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 67.

151 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 521–22.

152 Qur’ān, 27: 23, 26.

153 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 447–50.

154 Qur’ān, 81: 20.

155 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 326.

istawā);¹⁵⁶ “Then He (the most Merciful) established on the throne” (*thumma astawā ‘alā al-‘arsh*);¹⁵⁷ and “It is He who created for you everything on earth, then He ascended to the heavens fashioning them into seven heavens” (*huwa al-ladhī khalaqa lakum mā fī al-arḍi jamī‘an thumma ‘stawā ‘ilā al-samā‘i fa-sawwāhunna sab‘ al-samawātīn*).¹⁵⁸ However, his commentary of the verse 2:29 is comprehensive. First he gives the various meanings of *istawā*. It means “to turn towards” (*aqbala ‘alā*), “change of direction” (*taḥawwala*), “to intend” (*‘amada ilayhā*), and “height” (*‘uluww*) which means “to get up or rise up (*irtifā*)”. Then al-Ṭabarī gives four divergent interpretations of the verse. It can be: the end of a person’s youth and strength (*intihā shabāb al-raḥul wa-quwwa*); soundness after oppression (*istiḳāma ba’d awd*); response to something (*iqbāl ‘alā al-shay’*); occupation and seizure (*iḥtiyāz wa-istilā*); and elevation and height (*‘ulūww wa-irtifā*).

When God said, “He fashioned” (*fa-sawwāhunna*), He meant that He prepared them, created them, arranged them, organized them, and set them up. Thus God’s ordering out His heavens is His setting them up and arranging them as He willed, His opening them up after He had cleaved them together.

Al-Ṭabarī quotes Muḥammad b. Ishāq, who states that God rose up to the heavens, after creating the earth. God says that “Then He rose to the heaven when it was smoke, and said to it and the earth: ‘Come willingly or unwillingly. They said: ‘We come willingly’” (*thumma ‘stawā ‘ilā al-samā‘i wa-hiya dukhānun fa-qāla lahā wa-lil-arḍi i’tiyā ṭaw‘an aw karhan qālatā atynā ṭāi’in*).¹⁵⁹ The rising was after He created them as smoke, and before He ordered them into seven heavens.

For al-Ṭabarī, the preferable meaning for God is that “He rose above them and elevated and organized them by His power and created seven heavens”¹⁶⁰

Al-Ṭabarī gives two interpretations of *maqām maḥmūd*,¹⁶¹ based upon the various traditions. The first interpretation is the “place of intercession” (*maqām al-shafā‘a*) on the Day of Resurrection where Prophet Muḥammad will ask God for the intercession of his community. The second interpretation is Mu-

156 Qur’ān, 20: 5.

157 Qur’ān, 25: 59.

158 Qur’ān, 2: 29.

159 Qur’ān, 41: 11.

160 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān*, 1: 191–95; Gilliot, *Exégèse*, 238–245; J. Cooper, W.F. Madelung and A. Jones, *The Commentary on the Qur’ān by Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī*, an abridged translation of *Jāmi‘ al-bayān ‘an ta’wīl ay al-Qur’ān* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 1: 200–205.

161 Qur’ān, 17: 79.

ḥammad's sitting on the throne of God. For al-Ṭabarī, the authentic interpretation is the first one, because the second interpretation based on Mujāhid's tradition is not sound. It has neither been said by the Prophet, nor by the Companions, nor by the Successors of the Companions.¹⁶²

Al-Ṭabarī rejects the interpretation of certain Mu'tazilites for whom God's sitting on the throne means His authority. For him, *istiwa* means the elevation of God on the throne; and his interpretation of "elevation and height" (*al-'uluww wa l-irtifā'*) suggests that his position is similar to that of al-Ash'arī, who professed that [God] is on (*fawqa*) the throne with His essence (*bi-dhātihi*) and yet He is not a body. In addition, al-Ṭabarī professes the doctrine of the people of the sunna and the community (*ahl al-sunna wa al-jamā'a*), and narrates a tradition reported by Mālik b. Anas, going back to the Prophet Muḥammad or to one of his Companions: God's sitting on the throne (*istawā*) is known (*ma'lūm*), but its modality is unknown (*al-kayf al-majhūl*). The belief in the *istawā* is obligatory (*al-īmān bihi wājib*), and the inquiry about it is an innovation (*al-su'āl 'anhu bid'a*).¹⁶³

There are attributes which are not rationally self-evident but are associated with God in the Qur'ān, such as His hearing, sight, face and hands; and authentic *ḥadīths*, such as His steps and coming down, laughing, and fingers. According to al-Ṭabarī, there is no possibility of comprehending the real meanings of these attributes except intuitively. It is, therefore, necessary to affirm belief in these attributes without asking how (*bi-lā kayf*).¹⁶⁴

7 God's Hand (*yad Allāh*)

The following verse describes that "The Jews say: 'God's hands are tied.' May their own hands be tied, and cursed for what they say! Rather, both His hands are widely spread and He spends His bounty in any way He pleases." (*wa qālati al-yahūdu yadu Allāhi maghlūlatun ghullat aydihim wa lu'inū bimā qālū bal yadāhu mabsuṭatāni yunfiqu kayfa yashā'*).¹⁶⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī states that if someone is described that his hands are "tied" (*maghlūla*) it means that he is a miser and if a person is described that his hands are "extended" (*mabsuṭatān*), it means that he is generous. Then, he interprets the above verse and states that "tied hand" (*ghal al-yad*) and "extended hand" (*baṣṭ al-yad*) are metaphorically "niggardli-

¹⁶² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān*, 15: 141–48.

¹⁶³ Gilliot, *Exégèse*, 238–45.

¹⁶⁴ Al-Ṭabarī, *al-Taḥṣīr*, 132–47; al-Lālakā'i, *Sharḥ Uṣūl al-i'tiqād*, 2: 22–51, 65–92.

¹⁶⁵ Qur'ān, 5: 64.

ness” and “generosity” respectively. He quotes verse 17:29 in which God says: “Do not keep your hand tied to your neck and nor stretch it forth to its utmost reach” (*wa lā taʿjal yadaka maghlūlatan ilā ʿunuqika wa lā tabsuṭ-hā kull al-bast*). He refutes the allegation against God’s miserliness and quotes that “rather both His hands are widely spread” (*bal yadāhu mabsūṭatān*) which positively demonstrates His extreme generosity and rejection of niggardliness.¹⁶⁶

The following verse states that: “Those who swear allegiance to you in fact swear allegiance to God. God’s hand is above their hands.” (*inna al-ladhīna yubāyʿūnaka innamā yubāyʿūna Allāh yadu Allāhi fawqa aydihim*).¹⁶⁷ This verse was revealed in the context of the negotiations between the Prophet Muḥammad’s delegation and the Quraysh of Mecca prior to the treaty of Ḥudaybiyya. When it became uncertain whether the Quraysh treated one of the delegation members well or badly, the Companions of the Prophet pledged to the Prophet by placing their hands upon his hand for an alliance against the Quraysh. Al-Zamakhsharī interprets this verse metaphorically (*takhyīl*) and states that the Prophet’s hand was above the hands of those who were pledging to him: that was God’s Hand (*hiya yad Allāh*). And God’s Hand is pure from the limbs of the body and substance and matter, which means that the covenant with the Prophet was like the covenant with God, and there is no difference between both of them.¹⁶⁸ Similarly, in the verse “And that the bounty is in the hands of God; He gives it to whoever He pleases” (*wa anna al-faḍla bi-yad Allāh yuʿtihi man yashāʾ*),¹⁶⁹ al-Zamakhsharī interprets the Hands of God (*yad Allāh*) figuratively meaning that all the bounties are in His possession and at His disposal (*fī milkihi wa taṣarrufihi*).¹⁷⁰

8 Coming of Lord (*mujiʾ rabb*)

The following two verses mention that “Surely when the earth will be demolished completely, and your Lord will come together with the angels in row after row” (*kallā idhā dukkat al-arḍu dakkan dakkā wa jāʾa rabbuka wa al-malaku ṣaffan ṣaffā*).¹⁷¹ Al-Zamakhsharī poses a question: “What is the meaning and basis of God’s coming, His movement and motion and what is the justification of His

¹⁶⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 264–67.

¹⁶⁷ Qurʾān, 48: 10.

¹⁶⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 537–38.

¹⁶⁹ Qurʾān, 57: 29.

¹⁷⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 54–55.

¹⁷¹ Qurʾān, 89: 21–22.

direction?” Then he replies that: “It has been used as metaphorically for God’s appearance, and as signs of His power (*iqtidār*) and demonstration of His force (*qahr*) and authority (*sulṭān*).” He also cites an example that it is like a king who appears in person, his signs of authority become conspicuously visible in the presence of the army, ministers and elites who all accompany him. After that he interprets that the angels will come down from the heavens in the form of rows after rows, but excludes God and does not even mention Him.¹⁷²

9 Appearing of God (*ityān Allāh*)

For the verse: “Are they waiting for God to appear in the shadows of clouds with the angels, and the matter to be settled?” (*hal yanẓurūna illā an yā’tiahumu Allāhu fī ḡulalīn min al-ghamāmi wa al-malā’ikatu wa quḍiya al-amr*),¹⁷³ al-Zamakhsharī provides two interpretations. First, “appearing of God” (*ityān Allāh*) is “His command” (*amruhu*) and quotes: “That your Lord’s command should come” (*yā’tia amru rabbika*)¹⁷⁴ not the appearing of God Himself. Second, it is “His punishment” (*ba’suhu*) and al-Zamakhsharī supports this interpretation by quoting: “Yet what they did not even imagine would appear to them from God” (*wa bada lahum min Allāh mā lam yakūnū yaḥtasibūn*).¹⁷⁵ He says that it means that God may bring upon them His “punishment” (*ba’s*) and “retribution” (*naqam*) because He is all-Mighty (*‘azīz*). Al-Zamakhsharī says that if it is questioned as to why the punishment may come from the clouds, the answer is that one expects “mercy” (*raḥma*) from the clouds. If the punishment comes from the clouds, the matter becomes “more horrible” (*afḡa*) and “shocking” (*ahwal*), because if the “evil” (*sharr*) comes from a place where one could have never expected, it would have “more grief” (*aghamm*). Likewise, if the “goodness” (*khayr*) comes from a place where one could have never expected, it would be “more delightful” (*asarr*). Therefore, lightning will be the most horrible punishment which comes from the place where one expects the “rain” (*ghayth*), and rain is a symbol of God’s generosity. His interpretation of: “And the matter to be settled” (*wa quḍiya al-amr*) is that He completed His command by their destruction and annihilation and He brought the matter to an end.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 372–73.

¹⁷³ Qur’ān, 2: 210.

¹⁷⁴ Qur’ān, 16: 33.

¹⁷⁵ Qur’ān, 39: 47.

¹⁷⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 419.

10 With (*ma'yyat*)

In the following three verses, the Qur'ān mentions that God is with those who are righteous and is hearing and seeing whatever they do openly or secretly.

First verse: “God is verily with those who are pious and perform good deeds” (*inna Allāh ma'a al-ladhīna at-taqaw wa al-ladhīna hum muḥsinūn*).¹⁷⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the word “with” (*ma'a*) as “friend” (*walī*) and says that God is a friend of those who avoid sins (*huwa walī al-ladhīna ijtanibū al-ma'āthī*).¹⁷⁸

Second verse: “He (God) said: “Do not fear. Surely I am with you hearing and seeing” (*qāla lā takhāfā innanī ma'akumā asma'u wa arā*).¹⁷⁹

In this verse, he interprets “I am with you” (*ma'akumā*) as “your protector” (*ḥāfiẓ kumā*) and “your helper” (*nāṣir-kumā*).¹⁸⁰

Third verse: “Have you not seen that God knows all whatever is in the heavens and the earth? No three persons converse secretly but He is the fourth of them, and nor five but He is the sixth of them, nor even less than that or more but He is with them wherever they be. He will then inform them of their deeds on the Day of Judgment. Verily God has knowledge of everything.” (*alam tara anna Allāha ya'lamu mā fī al-samāwāti wa mā fī al-arḍ mā yakūnu min najwā thalāthatin illā huwa rābi'uhum wa lā kamsatin illā huwa sādisuhum wa lā adnā min dhālika wa lā akthara illā huwa ma'ahum ayna mā kānū thumma yunabbi'uhum bimā 'amilū yawm al-qiyāmati inna Allāha bi-kulli shay'in 'alīm*).¹⁸¹

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets that “He is with them wheresoever they may be” (*huwa ma'ahum aynā mā kānū*) that He knows whatever they converse secretly and nothing is hidden from Him, because He is always observing them. However, he adds that God is above “the place” (*al-makān*) and beyond being perceptible (*al-mushāhida*), so that there should not be any doubt about God being in a place and perceptible.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁷ Qur'ān, 16: 128.

¹⁷⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 490.

¹⁷⁹ Qur'ān, 20:46.

¹⁸⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 85.

¹⁸¹ Qur'ān, 58: 7.

¹⁸² Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 62–63.

11 Face (*wajh*)

In the following two verses: “Everyone upon it (earth) will perish, but the face of your Lord will abide (forever), full of majesty and nobility” (*kullu man ‘alayhā fān wa yabqā wajhu rabbika dhūl jalālī wal ikrām*),¹⁸³ al-Zamakhsharī interprets “the face of your Lord” (*wajh rabbika*) as His “essence” (*dhāt*) and “full of majesty and nobility” (*dhū al-jalāl wa al-ikrām*) as His “attribute” (*ṣifat*). He emphasizes that God is beyond comparison and ascribing any human characteristics, following the Mu‘tazilite principle of *tawḥīd*.¹⁸⁴

12 Conclusion

The first fundamental principle of the Mu‘tazilites is the unity of God, which is the most important thesis of their doctrine because it is the source of all other principles. Al-Zamakhsharī not only believes in this principle, but applies it in his interpretation of the Qur’ān. With regard to God’s attributes, al-Zamakhsharī agrees with Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’, who denies the attributes of God such as “knowledge, power, will and life” (*al-‘ilm wa-al-qudra wa-al-irāda wa-al-ḥayāt*).¹⁸⁵ So far as the createdness of the Qur’ān is concerned, al-Zamakhsharī considers that the Qur’ān is the speech of God and it is created by Him. The Mu‘tazilites’ reasoning is that God, identical with His attributes, is not subject to change. Therefore, it is impossible that the Qur’ān, in the sense of an attribute, is uncreated, for it is essentially multiple and temporal.

Al-Zamakhsharī emphasizes the absolute uniqueness and transcendence of God and denies His description anthropomorphically in any form, such as direction, place, vision, image, body, face, hand, eye, domain, movement, extinction, change, speaking, sitting, coming or appearing. He is of the opinion that the anthropomorphic verses in the Qur’ān are allegorical or figurative expressions to symbolize God’s attributes and actions. He interprets such verses by the method of *ta’wīl* or metaphorical interpretation, and elucidates such words according to a secondary or metaphorical meaning found elsewhere in the Qur’ān. It is evident from his interpretation of such verses in the *Kashshāf* as discussed in the preceding pages.

¹⁸³ Qur’ān, 55: 26–27.

¹⁸⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 9–11.

¹⁸⁵ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 31.

Chapter 5 Second Principle: Justice (‘*adl*’)

The second fundamental principle of the Mu‘tazilites after the unity of God (*al-tawḥīd*) is God’s justice (‘*adl*’). Even more than *ahl al-‘adl wa-al-tawḥīd*, they prefer to call themselves *ahl al-‘adl*.¹ According to Daniel Gimaret,

God is subject... to the same laws which apply to man... This is why, from the Mu‘tazili point, the necessary justice of God is not only fact, it is for Him a permanent obligation; in the name of His justice, God is required to act in such-and-such a fashion, since otherwise He would be unjust.²

The Mu‘tazilites unanimously agree that “the Creator (God) has always been just” (*al-bāri’ lam yazal ‘ādilan*)³ and “He created humans for their benefit not to harm them” (*khalāqa li-yanfa‘ahum lā li-yuḍarrāhum*).⁴ Therefore, all divine acts are good and none of God’s act is bad.

This principle is based upon the Mu‘tazilites’ doctrine of free will (*qadar*).⁵ They are of the view that human beings have “free choice” (*ikhtiyār*) and “capability” (*istiṭā’a*) before the act, and “power” (*qudra*) over the act. In other words, “every capability is equally the power of an act and of its opposite” (*qudratun ‘alayhi wa-‘alā ḍiddih*), and “it does not make the act necessary” (*wa-hiya ghayr mujibat lil-fi’l*). They deny that God imposes duties (*yukallifa*) on a person which is beyond his power (*mā lā yuqdir ‘alayhi*).⁶

Hishām b. al-Ḥakam (d. 179/796)⁷ lists five elements in the capability (*istiṭā’a*) to act, such as soundness of body; circumstances; duration of time; an in-

1 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milāl*, 1: 29; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 4:139; 7:3; 8:3; 13:4.

2 Gimaret, “Mu‘tazila,” *IE*², 7: 783–93.

3 Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 579.

4 Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 251.

5 According to George Hourani, “God knows all good and evil. He wishes and commands only good for men, but He allows them to do evil and to disobey His commands. Man has power to act as well as to know values, and so he is responsible for his just and unjust acts. God rewards the just and punishes the unjust in an everlasting afterlife, and He does so justly because of man’s full responsibility. See George F. Hourani, “Islamic and Non-Islamic Origins of Mu‘tazilite Ethical Rationalism,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 7 (1976), 61.

6 Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 230.

7 Abū Muḥammad Hishām b. al-Ḥakam, a client of the tribe of Kinda, was born in Wāsiṭ. He was the most prominent representative *Imāmī kalām* during the period of *Imāms* Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq and Mūsā al-Kāẓim. He was among the circles of theologians who participated in disputations in the presence of Yahyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī. Among his disciples were Yūnus b. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 208/823–4), Muḥammad b. Khalīl al-Sakkāk and al-Faḍl b. Shādhān Naysābūrī

strument, like hand, hatchet, needle; and a cause (*sabab*) to perform an act, which usually exists at the time of the action.⁸ Similarly, Bishr b. Mu'tamar⁹ states that capability consists of sound physical constitution, healthy limbs, and freedom from infirmities. He introduced the concept of "engendered act" (*ta-wallud*)¹⁰ – "an act prompted by a cause which is itself the effect of another cause. Thus in the act of opening a door with a key, there is first voluntary act, then the movement of the hand which turns the key, and lastly that of the key which turns the tongue of the lock. This last movement is an engendered act for it does not emanate directly from a voluntary decision."¹¹

The Mu'tazilites agree that a person has power over his good and bad deeds and is also their creator. However, they differ as to whether a man is able to act in the first moment or the second moment. According to Abū al-Hudhayl, "Man is able to act in the first, and he acts in the first, and the act occurs in the second; because the first moment is the one when he acts, and the second moment is the one when he has acted" (*al-insānu qādirun an yaf'ala fī al-awwal wa huwa yaf'alu fī al-awwal wa al-fī'l wāqī'u fī al-thānī li-anna al-waqt al-awwal waqt yaf'ala wa al-waqt al-thānī waqt fa'ala*).¹² He further states that, "The moment is the division between actions and it extends through the interval from action to action; and with every moment there comes into being an act" (*al-waqt huwa al-farq*

(d. ca. 260/874–5). Ibn al-Nadīm mentions of Hishām wrote twenty-six works, but none is extant. See Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 307–8; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 40, 42–43; Abū al-Ḥusayn 'Abd al-Raḥīm b. Muḥammad b. 'Uthmān al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-intiṣār wa-al-radd 'alā Ibn al-Rawāndī*, ed. Albert Nader (Beirut: Al-Maṭba'a Kathūlikiya, 1957), 81–84; W. Madelung, "Hishām b. al-Ḥakam," *EF*, 3:496–98.

⁸ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 42–43; Watt, *Formative Period*, 235.

⁹ Abū Sahl Bishr b. Mu'tamar al-Hilālī, founder of Mu'tazilite school of Baghdād was born in Baghdād. He moved to Baṣra, where he studied with Bishr b. Sa'īd and Abū 'Uthmān al-Za'farānī who were the companions of Wāsil b. 'Atā'. He also studied with Mu'ammār b. 'Abbād al-Sulamī. Ibn al-Nadīm mentions in the *Fihrist*, that he wrote twenty works. He wrote against the Khārījites, heretics (*mulḥidīn*), ignorants (*juhhāl*), Abū al-Hudhayl, al-Nazzām, Ḍirār, Ḥaṣḥ b. Fard, Hishām b. al-Ḥakam and al-Aṣamm. He participated in the circle of Barmakīs. Abū Mūsā al-Murdār, Thumāmā b. Ashras and Aḥmad b. Abī Du'ād were among his disciples. See Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 287; al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 401–3; al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:44–45; al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, 119–22; al-Balkhī, *Bāb Dhikr al-Mu'tazila*, 72–73; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Faḍl*, 265–67; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 10:203; Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *Ṭabaqāt*, 52–54; Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *al-Munya*, 30–31; al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār*, 53–54; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 1:115; Watt, *Formative Period*, 237.

¹⁰ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 401–403; al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:44; al-Baghdādī, *al-Farq*, 120–21.

¹¹ A.N. Nader, "Bishr b. al-Mu'tamir (Abū Sahl al-Hilālī)," *EF*, 1:1243–44.

¹² Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 233; al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 35.

bayna al-a'māl wa huwa madā mā bayna 'amalin ilā 'amalin wa annahu yuḥdithu ma'a kulli waqtin fa'ḥun).¹³

According to Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī, "Whoever has the power of a thing can equally well do it or not do it" (*min ḥaqqi al-qādir 'alā al-shay' an yaṣīḥḥa an yaf'alahu wa-an lā yaf'alahu*).¹⁴ Therefore, God creates in human beings the power necessary for the fulfillment of acts, which His law imposes upon them. Any form of "obligation to the impossible acts" (*taklīf mālā yuṭāq*) is contrary to His justice.¹⁵ God is just, and He does not desire evil and does not ordain it for His servants. He has nothing to do with their evil deeds; all human actions result from their free will, because they have power and capability before performing their acts. They will be rewarded for their good deeds and punished for their bad deeds.

'Abd al-Jabbār (d. 415/1025) considers an act (*fi'l*) as an attribute (*ṣifa*) of an act and defines an act occurring from an agent (*fā'il*) capable of exercising power over it (*qādir 'alayhi*). He divides acts into two categories: acts that carry no attributes, i.e., they are neither good nor bad and acts that carry an attribute, such as goodness or badness. Neutral acts have no attribute over and above their existence, such as the acts of a person who is unaware (*sāhin*) or asleep (*nā'im*). He describes the value of an act (*zā'ida 'alā wujūdi-hi*) by means of which one necessarily or intuitively knows whether or not the agent of act deserves blame (*dhamm*). Acts which have attributes are further divided into two categories: good (*ḥasan*) acts and bad (*qabīḥ*) acts. The performers of good acts do not deserve any blame while the performers of bad acts deserve blame when they do it deliberately and of their free will, such as lying (*kidhb*) and injustice (*ẓulm*) which he defines as undue harm inflicted on others.¹⁶

God's acts fall into the categories of either gracious or obligatory which are intended for the goodness and aimed at assisting and benefitting others and consequently merit praise.¹⁷ The gracious acts of God are the act of creation and the act of providing the divine law, while His obligatory acts are those which come as a consequence of His gracious acts. Creation is the most important divine act which made God known, and manifested all His essential qualities. Creation of the world can neither be the act of someone who does not know nor is it use-

13 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 443.

14 'Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 9: 73.

15 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 397, 401.

16 'Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 6I: 5–8, 18, 31; 13: 298–303; Kambiz Ghaneabassiri, "The Epistemological Foundation of Conceptions of Justice in Classical Kalām: A Study of 'Abd al-Jabbār's *al-Mughnī* and Ibn al-Bāqillānī's *al-Tamhid*," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 19 (2008), 76–79.

17 'Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 11: 58–60, 68.

less because God has eternal wisdom. God only does which is “good” (*ḥasan*), and He is necessarily “exempt from any act which is bad or evil” (*munazzah ‘an kull qabīḥ*). God is incapable of doing evil, by virtue of the principle that anyone who recognizes an act as bad necessarily does not commit it.¹⁸ The Qur’ān reiterates in many places that, God does not do any wrong any one, not even the equal of an atom;¹⁹ your Lord does not wrong any one;²⁰ and your Lord is not unjust to His servants.²¹

God is “wise” (*ḥakīm*) and not “foolish” (*safīḥ*), and He acts for a certain motive, towards a certain end, otherwise His action would be a “vain act” (*‘abath*).²² The only motive, which God desires, is “the good” (*ṣalah*) for His creatures. All the Mu’tazilites agree that “God has created men for their benefit” (*khalaqa ‘ibādi-hi li-yanfa’ahum*).²³

Al-Ash’arī states that there are limits to human free will and its relationship to God’s creative powers. His theory of acquisition (*kasb*) which was later elaborated and refined by his followers, is a reconciliation of the all-encompassing nature of the divine will with the real responsibility of human beings for actions, and thus to uphold the justice of human beings subject to reward and punishment.²⁴

According to al-Ash’arī God’s will encompasses everything, and everything comes into being through His will. He is of the opinion that it is based on the following three propositions. First, God’s will being one of His essential attributes must include everything which can really be willed. Second, God is creator of everything that is originated in time, and He creates nothing without specifically willing it. He states that: “Your Lord does as He wills” (*inna rabbaka fa’ā’ā-lul limā yurīd*).²⁵ Third, if something takes place that was not willed by Him, then this implies one of the two conclusions: either He is forgetful and negligent (*sahw wa ghaflah*) of that thing or weak and incapable (*ḍu’f wa ‘ajz*) in relation to it. Al-Ash’arī insists upon God’s omnipotence, and considers that everything good and evil is willed by God and He creates the acts of men by creating in men the power to do each act. All the dimensions of al-Ash’arī’s concept of jus-

18 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 309, 315; al-Shahraṣṭānī, *Milal*, 1:30.

19 Qur’ān, 4:40.

20 Qur’ān, 18:49.

21 Qur’ān, 41:46.

22 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 11: 58 – 61, 387.

23 Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 250.

24 Anvari, “al-Ash’arī,” *EIs*, 3: 833 – 59.

25 Qur’ān, 11:107; 85:16.

tice are based upon the principle that the standards by which human actions are deemed to be either good or evil cannot be applied to God's actions.²⁶

Al-Ash'arī considers human action as being both attributable to them as a result of their free choice, for which they are responsible, and as being the direct creation of God. He states this formulation in terms of acquisition (*kasb*), that is, man acquires his own actions, created by God. Acquisition in itself is an act that comes into being by means of originated power. The only requirement for an act to be attributed to a human being is that it should be accompanied by his will and the power to perform it. Thus any act intended by a person is performed in two stages: first, he has will and power exists within him to perform it; second, God brings it about through His will and power. Al-Ash'arī states that this acquisition by man is simultaneously the act and the creation of God, and likewise ascribes the involuntary movements of man to the creative will of God. However, he distinguishes acquisition from involuntary action in that man is aware of the difference between these two types of motion. Accordingly, the reality of the freedom of human choice (*ikhtiyār*) is proven by the very fact that human beings are aware that they possess this freedom.²⁷ So, al-Ash'arī affirms the principle of choice, while identifying it with the freedom of the will, and arguing that it is determined by the all-encompassing nature of the divine will; hence human will and power are dependent upon the divine will and creation.

However, the Mu'tazilites have different viewpoints on almost all the issues with the exception of a few. For instance, in case of "grace" (*luṭf*), they have four different opinions; and for "capability" (*istaṭā'a*), there are also four views. Whether a man has power over an act at the first moment or at the second moment is also subject to seven contradictory opinions.²⁸ Whenever any question arose, whether it was related to God's power or human beings' responsibility, the Mu'tazilites have been constantly debating and reaching no satisfactory answer. Whether the answer is affirmative or negative, in any case, either God's omnipotence, or humans' responsibility will be compromised. The Qur'ān maintains a balance between God's omnipotence and man's responsibility, but the Mu'tazilites tend to place lesser importance to God's omnipotence and more emphasis upon the human beings' responsibility.

²⁶ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 233. Al-Ash'arī, *al-Luma'*, 24–31; al-Ash'arī, *al-Ibāna*, 46–52.

²⁷ Al-Ash'arī, *al-Luma'*, 41–44; Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 90–92; Anvari, "Al-Ash'arī," *EIs*, 3: 833–59.

²⁸ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 233.

Al-Zamakhsharī believes in the principle of justice and quotes that: “We have guided him upon the path, that he may either be grateful or disbelieving” (*innā hadaynāhu al-sabīla immā shākiran wa immā kafūrā*),²⁹ and interprets it that God has established and decided for all the human beings two states of affairs, either to be grateful or disbelievers. God says that He invites the people toward Islam with rational arguments and revelation, either to believe or disbelieve. Al-Zamakhsharī quotes that “We guided him onto two highways” (*wa hadaynāhu al-najadayn*),³⁰ and the description of the path with gratefulness or disbelieving has been mentioned metaphorically. If a person becomes grateful, it is due to success granted by God; and if he becomes disbeliever it is due to his wrong choice.³¹

Al-Zamakhsharī’s interpretation of the verse: “God is witness that there is no god but He and so do the angels and men of knowledge, He is the upholder of justice” (*shahida Allāhu annahu lā ilāha illā huwa wa al-malā’ikatu wa ‘ulū al-‘ilm qā’iman bi al-qist*)³² is that God Himself, His angels and “people of knowledge” (*‘ulū al-‘ilm*) testify that there is no God but He and He is upholder of justice. When He is described with His being, His established attributes are His “oneness” (*waḥdāniyya*) and “justice” (*‘adl*). Those who establish His oneness and justice with “manifest” (*sāṭi*) and “conclusive” (*qāṭi*) proofs are the “scholars of justice” (*‘ulamā’ al-‘adl*).³³

1 The Concept of Grace (*luṭf*)

The term *luṭf*³⁴ means granting of “divine grace,” while its opposite term, *khiḍhlān* means “abandoning or withholding of divine grace.” According to Bishr b. al-Mu’tamar, if God bestows grace (*luṭf*) upon all the human beings they will believe and deserve reward, but if they believe without grace, their reward will be more. However, it is not necessary for God to bestow His grace to all. And it is not necessary for God to do “the best” (*al-aṣḥaḥ*) because there is no limit to goodness within His power; and there is always better. However, God

²⁹ Qur’ān: 76:3.

³⁰ Qur’ān: 90:10.

³¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 275.

³² Qur’ān, 3:18.

³³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 534–39.

³⁴ *Luṭf* is used in the Qur’ān in two senses, as gracious and kind. See Qur’ān, 42:19, 6:103, 22:63, 31:16, 33:34 and 67:14.

must endow human beings with the capability and power and remove all impediments to belief through invitation and message (by the Prophets).³⁵

Ja'far b. Ḥarb (d. 236/850) agreed with Bishr and said that if God bestows grace upon the unbelievers they will believe in Him but they will not deserve as much reward as those who believed without the bestowal of grace. However, the majority of Mu'tazilites did not agree with the views of Bishr b. al-Mu'tamar and Ja'far b. Ḥarb.³⁶

Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī both are of the view that God neither withhold grace from His creation, nor anything which is "good" (*ṣalāh*) and "best" (*aṣḥaḥ*) for them, because He knows that if they were granted with grace it would lead them to their obedience and repentance. The reason for this is that God is omnipotent, omniscient, generous and wise, who suffers no loss in His treasures by giving and whose possessions are not increased by withholding them.³⁷ However, Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī differ on some issues of the grace. According to Abū 'Alī, God knows that "if a person believes with bestowal of grace his reward will be less because of less hardship, and if a person believes without bestowal of grace his reward will be more because of more hardship" (*law āmana ma'a al-luṭf la-kāna thawābuhu aqalla li-qil-lati mushaqqatuhu wa law āmana bi-lā al-luṭf la-kāna thawābuhu akthara li-'aẓmi mushaqqatuhu*). In this case, it is not appropriate for God to impose an obligation upon him without grace. Similarly, He should not treat him like the one about whom He knows that he will not be obedient except with grace. If God were to impose an obligation on him without grace, He would be making his situation worse. Abū Hāshim disagrees with Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī and in his view, it is not befitting for God to impose an obligation on a man without granting him grace. In such a case, man has to make great efforts to achieve belief without grace and therefore, his reward would be greater.³⁸

'Abd al-Jabbār provides the most systematic treatment of *lutf*. He states that the basis of *lutf* is God's justice (*'adl*) and rationality. He does not differentiate between "the grace" (*al-luṭf*) and "the best" (*al-maṣḥaḥ*). According to him, "the grace and the best are one and the same and their meanings are what a man chooses between what is obligatory upon him and abstains from evil deeds" (*wa ammā al-luṭf wa al-maṣḥaḥ fa-wāḥid wa ma'nā humā mā yakhtārū al-mar'indahu wājiban aw yajtanibu 'indahu qabīḥan*). He states that at the be-

35 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 246–47, 573; al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:45.

36 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 246–47.

37 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 55.

38 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 57–58.

stowal of grace, a person is more likely to choose to perform what is obligatory upon him and abandon evil deeds.³⁹

‘Abd al-Jabbār argues against Bishr b. al-Mu‘tamar and the Baghdādī school, who claim that bestowing “the grace is not obligatory upon God” (*al-lutf lā yajib ‘alā Allāh*). Their reasoning is that if granting of grace is incumbent upon God, then there will be no sinful person found in this world because of his protection due to God’s grace. However, there are both types of people, obedient and disobedient in this world. It is obvious that grace is not obligatory upon God. ‘Abd al-Jabbār responds that the fact is quite the contrary to that which Bishr claims. There are some people who choose to fulfill God’s commands and avoid the evil deeds. God also knows that there are some people who do the opposite. Therefore, if God grants grace to everyone without any distinction, some of them may not perform God’s commands and do the evil deeds.⁴⁰ However, he does not address the issue raised by Bishr that God cannot arbitrarily grant His grace to some and withhold it from others.

The majority of the Mu‘tazilites believe that God has an obligation to do “the best for people in their religion” (*aṣṣaḥ lahum fī dīnīhim*) because it is inconceivable that He does not grant them all what they need to fulfill their obligations when He imposes obligations upon them. According to ‘Abd al-Jabbār, God imposes laws upon people for their advantage to achieve happiness in the form of reward if they follow His commandments. He does for human beings what is to their greatest advantage (*al-aṣṣaḥ lahum*).⁴¹ He is responsible to assist them in the fulfillment of His commands because humans are able to perform them with His favor (*tafaḍḍul*).⁴²

According to al-Ash‘arī “God has the power to grant His grace to people and they will surely believe in Him” (*annahū qādir ‘alā an yaf‘ala bihim lutfan law fa‘alahu bihim la-āmanū ajma‘ūn*). Likewise, He has the power to withhold it and they will disbelieve Him. He further states that God has bestowed His graces (*alṭāf*) upon the prophets and the believers and quotes the following two verses: “But for the grace of God and His mercy upon you none would have ever been pure” (*wa law lā faḍl Allāhi ‘alaykum wa raḥmatuhu mā zakā minkum min aḥadin abadā*),⁴³ and “Had it not been for God’s favor and His mercy upon you, you

39 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 779.

40 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 520.

41 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 11: 387, 393.

42 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 14: 53.

43 Qur’ān, 24:21.

would have certainly followed Satan, except a few” (*wa law lā faḍl Allāhi ‘alay-kum wa raḥmatuhu la-ttaba’tum al-shayṭān illā qalīlā*).⁴⁴

Al-Ash‘arī further states that God may bestow His grace (*lutf*) upon unbelievers in order to inspire belief in them. However, if He refrains from doing so it is not considered miserliness (*bukhl*) on the part of God, because no creation has a claim upon Him. It is therefore, not in any way incumbent upon God to admit the believers to paradise or send the unbelievers to Hell, apart from the fact that He has informed them that He will do so and He does not lie. He does not lie due to its impossibility vis-à-vis the divine essence: lying contradicts the attribute of veracity (*ṣidq*) by which He has described Himself. Neither can God be called ignorant because it contradicts the fact that He has attributed Himself with knowledge.⁴⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī uses the concept of *lutf* frequently in his interpretation. He prefers Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbāi’ and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbāi’s definition of *lutf* and refers to both of them in his *tafsīr* as *shaykhayn*.

According to al-Zamakhsharī, bestowal of “grace” (*lutf*) upon the believers means “guidance” (*hudā*) while “abandoning” (*khidhlān*) of the unbelievers is synonymous to “leading astray” (*idlāl*). In his interpretation of “God leads astray whom He wills, and guides whom He pleases” (*fa yuḍillu Allāh man yashā’ wa yahdi man yashā’*)⁴⁶ and “It is He who created you, some of you are unbelievers and some are believers” (*huwa al-ladhī khalaqakum fa minkum kāfirun wa min-kum mu’minun*),⁴⁷ al-Zamakhsharī says that these two verses are equivalent in their meanings because God does not lead astray anyone until He knows that he will never believe. Similarly, He does not guide except the one whom He knows that he will believe. *Idlāl* (leading astray) means prevention of grace and *hudā* (guidance) means granting of grace, and it is a metonymy (*kināya*) for unbelief (*kufr*) and belief (*īmān*). He further states that, “He (God) does not abandon anyone except those who deserve to be abandoned and He does not grant grace except to those who deserve to be granted” (*falā yakhdhul illā ahl al-khidhlān wa lā yaltaf illā bi ahl al-lutf*).⁴⁸

When God grants grace upon a person and when he deprives him of it is mentioned in the following verse: “We have sent a messenger to every community (saying): ‘Worship God, and keep away from idol worship’. Thus, some of

⁴⁴ Qur’ān, 4:83.

⁴⁵ Al-Ash‘arī, *al-Luma’*, 70–71; al-Ash‘arī, *al-Ibāna*, 52–53; Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 125–26, 142–43; Anvari, “al-Ash‘arī,” *EIs*, 3: 833–59..

⁴⁶ Qur’ān, 14: 4.

⁴⁷ Qur’ān, 64: 2.

⁴⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 361–63.

them God guided, and some deserved to be led astray” (*wa laqad ba’athnā fī kullī ummatin rasūlan ani ‘abudū Allāh wajtanibū al-ṭāghūt fa minhum man hadā Allāh wa minhum man ḥaqqat alyhi al-ḍalāla*).⁴⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the verse that God knows that a person who is granted grace will be a believer and a person who is abandoned will be an unbeliever because that person is determined to be so and hence no good will come from him.⁵⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the following three verses in which he uses the concept of grace.

First verse: “How could God guide those who disbelieved after they had believed?” (*kayfa yahdī Allāhu qawman kafarū ba’da imānihim*).⁵¹

He interprets it as “how can God grant them grace when they do not deserve it? God knows the determination of their disbelief. The proof of the firm disbelief is manifested in their reversion after accepting the belief, witnessing the truth of the Prophet (Muḥammad), and miracles verifying his prophethood.”⁵²

Second verse: “Those who do not believe in the signs of God are not guided by God. For them is severe punishment” (*inna al-ladhīna la yu’minūna bi-āyat Allāh lā yahdīhim Allāh wa lahum ‘adhābun alīm*).⁵³

In his interpretation of this verse he says that since God knows that they will never believe, He does not grant them any grace. They are the people who have been abandoned in this world and there will be severe punishment for them in the hereafter.⁵⁴

Third verse: “And We have created for Hell many jinns and human beings. They have hearts but do not understand; and they have eyes but do not see and they have ears but do not listen. They are like cattle, or rather even more misguided. They are people unconcerned” (*wa laqd dhara’nā li-jahannam kathīran min al-jinn wa al-īns lahum qulūbun lā yafqahūna bihā wa lahum a’yūnun lā yubṣirūna bihā wa lahum ādhānun lā yasma’ūna bihā ‘ulā’ika ka al-an’ām bal hum aḍall ‘ulā’ika hum al-ghāfilūn*).⁵⁵

He interprets that their hearts have been sealed (due to their disbelief) and God knows that there is no grace for them. They are those whose minds have no perception of the truth (*ma’rifat al-ḥaqq*), they do not see despite their eyes with discernment what God has created; they do not hear despite their hearing the

⁴⁹ Qur’ān, 16: 36.

⁵⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 435–36.

⁵¹ Qur’ān, 3: 86.

⁵² Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 578.

⁵³ Qur’ān, 16: 104.

⁵⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 474–75.

⁵⁵ Qur’ān, 7: 179.

message of God with contemplation, as if their minds cannot comprehend, their eyes cannot perceive and their ears cannot grasp. The severity of their obstinacy (*shidda shakā'imihim*) in their disbelief has made their deeds like the ones of the people of the Fire. They are like cattle in their understanding, observation and comprehension and more misguided than them.⁵⁶

2 The Best (*aṣḥaḥ*)

Most of the Mu'tazilites agree that God created human beings "for their own good not to harm them" (*li-yanfa'ahum lā li-yuḍarrāhum*).⁵⁷ Similarly, it is in their best interest that He imposed obligations upon them so that by fulfilling them they may achieve the sublime form of happiness which is the reward from God for the endurance of pain.⁵⁸ Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm b. Sayyār al-Naẓẓām (d. ca. 226/845) was the first who introduced the concept of "best" (*ṣaḥaḥ*). He considers that since "evil is an essential quality of the evil" (*al-qabīḥ ṣifa dhātia lil-qabīḥ*), therefore, the doing of it cannot be ascribed to God, and the possibility of God's doing evil is also evil hence it cannot be attributed to God who is just. "God has power to do what He knows to be good for his servants, but no power to do in this world what is not good for them" (*innamā yaqdiru 'alā mā ya'lam anna fī-hi salāḥan li-'ibādihi wa-lā yaqdiru 'alā an yaf'al bi-'ibādihi fī al-dunyā mā laysa fī-hi salāḥa-hum*). According to him, only what God has created and brought into existence is within His power. If God knew of anything better or more perfect that was within His power to create like the order, arrangement and goodness of things, He would have created it.⁵⁹ Abū al-Hudhayl was also of the opinion that God has created His servants for their benefit (*li-manfi'atihim*). Had it not been the reason then there was no need to create them because if He had created them neither for benefit nor for harm then it is frivolous (*'abath*).⁶⁰

Muḥammad b. al-Nu'mān al-Mufīd is of the opinion that God is obliged to do for the people that which is to their greatest benefit both "in their religion and

⁵⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 533–34.

⁵⁷ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 251.

⁵⁸ 'Abd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 11: 387.

⁵⁹ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milāl*, 1: 37.

⁶⁰ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 252.

worldly life” (*fī dīnīhim wa-dunyāhum*), a principle applying to the rich as well as the poor, to the healthy as well as to the sick.⁶¹

Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī were of the view that “the best is not the most pleasant” (*laysa al-aṣḥaḥ huwa al-aladhdh*) but it is most rewarding in the hereafter and most appropriate in this world even though it may be painful and disgusting.⁶²

Al-Zamakhsharī defending his Mu‘tazilite views, maintains that God does for His servants what is “the best” (*aṣḥaḥ*). His interpretation of the following four verses attests it.

First verse: “He (God) cannot be questioned about what He does, but they will be questioned” (*lā yus’alu ‘ammā yaf’l wa hum yus’alūn*).⁶³

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets that customarily the kings and the powerful persons are not questioned about their activities and affairs with regard to the management and administration of their kingdoms and possessions due to fear and grandeur despite their mistakes and corruption. “The King of kings and the Lord of the lords” (*malik al-mulūk wa-rabb al-arbāb*) who is their creator and provider is the one who is worthier and more entitled not to be questioned about His activities. He does everything with wisdom and neither any mistake nor any evil can occur from Him. But those who belong to Him under His subjugation and prone to making errors have been created by Him; they are to be questioned for all the activities they perform. He concludes that God’s activities are based on His wisdom and for the benefit of human beings.⁶⁴

Second verse: “Of all things there We have treasures with Us, send it down in a well-known proportion (*wa in min shay’ illā ‘indanā khazā’inuhu wa mā numaz-ziluhu illā bi-qadarin ma’lūm*).⁶⁵

He says that “treasures” (*khazā’in*) has been used figuratively and it means that everything which is beneficial to the people is in the power of God including “creation” (*ijād*), “origination” (*takwīn*) and benefaction (*in‘ām*). He grants to the people according to the proportion which He knows is “good for him” (*maṣlaḥa lahu*) and He distributes His treasures according to one’s capacity and capability.⁶⁶

61 Muḥammad b. al-Nu‘mān al-Mufīd, *Awā’il al-maqālāt fī madhāhib wa-al-mukhtārāt*, ed. Faḍl Allāh Zanjānī and Hibat al-Dīn Muḥammad Shahrastānī (Tabriz: Maktabat Ḥaqīqat, 1951), 25–26.

62 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 55.

63 Qur’ān, 21: 23.

64 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 137.

65 Qur’ān, 15: 21.

66 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 402.

Third verse: “And do not speak to Me concerning those who are wrong-doers, for they will certainly be drowned” (*wa lā tukhāṭibnī fī al-ladhina ḡalamū innahum mughraqūn*).⁶⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī states that this verse relates to Noah’s people who did not accept his message and when it became clear that they were evil-doers, God in His wisdom commanded them to be drowned. Their drowning was good in the interest of society because leaving them unpunished was to spread more corruption in the society. It was also good for other people to be warned and learn a lesson that if they did not follow the commands of God their end would be the same. To deal with the wrong-doings of the unbelievers in the form of their punishment and creating an environment for the believers was necessary for the goodness of the people.⁶⁸

Fourth verse: “To God leads the right path, though some deviate” (*wa ‘alā Allāhi qaṣḍu al-sabīl wa minhā jā’ir*).⁶⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī explains that the direction of the way leading His servants to the right path and truth is the purpose of God. He clarifies it by citing that “It is indeed for Us to show the guidance” (*inna ‘alaynā lal-hudā*).⁷⁰

3 Guidance and going astray (*hidāya wa iḍlāl*)

The Mu’tazilites believed in the concept of human free will, and opposed the doctrine of predestination because it was against the principle of justice (*‘adl*). According to them, since an individual was given freedom to choose between belief and disbelief as well as between obedience and disobedience to God, it would be unjust on the part of God to decide in advance the fate of anyone with regard to guidance (*hidāya*) or going astray (*iḍlāl*).

There are two views among the Mu’tazilites regarding “guidance” (*hidāya*). The first view is that God guides the believers because “He has given them the name of rightly guided” (*sammāhum muhtadīn*) and decided it for them. God increases their belief by bestowing His “advantages” (*fawā’id*) and “graces” (*alṭāf*) which are called guidance (*hudā*) as He says: “Those who are rightly guided will be given greater guidance by Him” (*wa al-ladhina ahtadaw zādahum hudan*).⁷¹ The second view is that of Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī, who says that “(God) guides all

⁶⁷ Qur’ān, 23: 27.

⁶⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4: 226 – 28.

⁶⁹ Qur’ān, 16: 9.

⁷⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 426; Qur’ān, 92:12.

⁷¹ Qur’ān, 47:17; al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 260.

the creation because He has demonstrated proof and provided indisputable evidence to them” (*hadā al-khalq al-ajmaʿin bi-anna dallahum wa bayyana lahum*). The believers’ guidance is increased by God’s graces and reward for their good deeds in this world. In addition, He will guide them in the hereafter towards the paradise, and it is this reward which He mentions in the Qurʾān that: “Their Lord shall guide them for their belief; beneath them shall flow rivers in gardens of delight (*yahdihim rabbuhum bi-īmānihilim tajrī min taḥtihi al-anhāru fī jannātin naʿīm*).”⁷²

So far as “going astray” (*iḍlāl*) is concerned, there are two views among the Muʿtazilites. The first view is that “(God) has misguided a person meaning that He has named him misguided” (*aḍalla ʿabdan bi-maʿna annahu sammāhu ḍāl-lan*). The second view is that “God has allowed him to be in error” (*jāzāhu ʿalā ḍalāla*).⁷³

The following two verses describe a conversation of hypocrites who say: “When they meet the believers they say: ‘We believe;’ but when they are alone with their evil ones they say: ‘We are really with you; we were merely joking.’” But God turns the joke against them leaving them to wander blindly in their wickedness. (*wa idhā laqū al-ladhīna āmanū qālū āmannā wa idhā khalaw ilā shayāṭīnihim qālū innā maʿakum innamā naḥnu mustahziʿūn Allāhu yastahziʿu bihim wa yumudduhum fī ṭughyānihim yaʿmahūn*).⁷⁴

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets these verses by asking the question what is the justification of God helping them, even though their evil friends would like to help them to continue in error which is an act of Satan? He gives three reasons. First, God prevents His “graces” (*alṭāf*) which are conferred upon the believers. Their “abandonment” (*khidhlān*) is due to their unbelief and insistence upon it. The darkness increases in their hearts, whereas the believers’ hearts become “wide open” (*inshirāḥ*) and “light” (*nūr*). Second, it could be due to the prevention of constraint” (*al-qasr wa al-iljā*).⁷⁵ Third, in fact it is an act of Satan but ascribed to God because He has given Satan authority to lead the people astray.⁷⁶

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets “Whomsoever God wants to guide He opens wide his heart to Islam” (*fa man yurid Allāhu an yahdiyahu yashraḥ ṣadrahu lil-*

72 Qurʾān, 10:9; al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, 261.

73 Al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, 141; al-Ashʿarī, *Maqālāt*, 261–62.

74 Qurʾān, 2: 14–15.

75 Schwarz, *Notion of iljā*, 413–27; ʿAbd al-Jabbār, *al-Mughnī*, 6II: 257, 268.

76 When Satan refused to bow down to Adam out of pride, God expelled him from the Paradise. He requested God to give him time until the Day of Resurrection. God granted his request. Satan said: “My Lord, as You have condemned me, I shall embellish for people (their evil deeds) on the earth and lead them astray.” See Qurʾān, 15:32–40; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 179–90.

Islām),⁷⁷ that if God wills He grants His grace (*luṭf*) and he becomes interested in Islam and his soul feels tranquility and likes to accept it. On the other hand, “Whomsoever He wants to lead astray, He makes his heart narrow and constricted” (*wa man yurid an yuḍillahu yajʿal ṣadrahu ḍayyiqan ḥaraja*),⁷⁸ al-Zamakhsharī interprets that God abandons (*yakhdhil*) and leaves him and no grace is awarded to him. Since he has no grace from God, his heart becomes so hardened that he refuses to accept the truth and “belief” (*īmān*) does not enter into his heart. He interprets “This is the straight path of your Lord,” (*hādihā ṣirāt rabbika mustaqimā*) by explaining that this path which is upright and just has been chosen by wisdom (*ḥikma*). In his interpretation, al-Zamakhsharī does not attribute “guidance” (*hudā*) and “leading astray” (*ḍalāla*) to God since it goes against the concept of human freedom. In order to be in accordance with the Muʿtazilites principles, he uses the words “grace” (*luṭf*) and “abandonment” (*khidhlān*) instead of “guidance” and “leading astray” respectively. He maintains that “faith” (*īmān*) is a man’s acquisition, not a divine gift.⁷⁹

In the following verse, God addresses that: “O Messenger, do not grieve on account of those who hasten to unbelief, from among those who say with their mouths: ‘We believe’, while their hearts do not believe; ... whosoever, God wishes to leave in error, you can do nothing to save him from God. These are the people whose hearts God does not wish to purify. For them is disgrace in this world and a terrible punishment in the world to come” (*yā ayyuha al-rasūlu lā yaḥzunka al-ladhīna yusārīʿūna fī al-kufri min al-ladhīna qālū āmannā bi-afwāhihim wa lam tuʾmin qulūbuhum ... wa man yuridi Allāhu fitnatahu fa-lan tamlika lahu min Allāhi shayāʾ ʾulāʾik al-ladhīna lam yurid Allāh an yuṭahhira qulūbuhum lahum fī al-dunyā khizun wa lahum fī al-ākhirati adhābun ʾaẓīm*).⁸⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī states that this verse exposes the idolators’ deception towards Islam, and their quick rush and infatuation in the disbelief, when they opposed the Prophet Muḥammad. However, God assures the Prophet that He will help and protect him from their evil designs. He further states that whomsoever God leaves in error, he remains in fascination (*maftūn*) with disbelief and abandonment (*khidhlān*), and there is no possibility of grace (*luṭf*) and prosperity (*tawfīq*) for him. God does not purify the unbelievers’ hearts because they are not worthy of it, and He knows that there is no benefit and success for them.⁸¹

⁷⁷ Qurʾān, 6: 125.

⁷⁸ Qurʾān, 6: 125.

⁷⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 393–95.

⁸⁰ Qurʾān, 5: 41.

⁸¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 235–37.

Al-Zamakhsharī states that the verse: “Whosoever is guided by God, follows the right path; and he whom He leads astray, you will not find friend to direct him,” (*man yahdī Allāhu fa huwa al-muhtad wa man yuḍlil fa lan tajida lahu waliyyan murshidā*),⁸² relates to the “People of the Cave” (*aṣḥāb al-kaḥf*) who are being praised by God for the steadfastness in their belief and submission to Him. God granted them His grace and led them to the right path and to the attainment of resplendent nobility (*al-karāma al-saniyya*) as well as the privilege of being mentioned in the splendid verse (*al-ayā al-‘aẓīma*). He interprets the verse that whosoever adopts the path of “the rightly guided” (*al-muhtadiyyīn al-rāshidīn*) people, he will achieve “success” (*falāḥ*) and “bliss” (*sa‘āda*). On the contrary, a person who is abandoned by God would not find anyone who could guide him to the right path.⁸³

Al-Zamakhsharī’s interpretation of the verse: “If God had pleased He would have made you a single nation, but He leads astray whom He wills, and guides whom He pleases” (*wa law shā’a Allāhu la-ja‘alakum ummatan wāḥidatan wa lākin yuḍillu man yashā’u wa yahdī man yashā’*),⁸⁴ is that if God wished He could have made all the people one nation by force (*qasr*). However, God did not will to force the people to believe in Him even though He could have done so, because He preferred to endow the human beings with free will so that they could choose themselves by their own intellect whether they want to be believers or not. He states that God grants His grace to those people whom He already knows will choose belief (*īmān*). On the other hand, He abandons those people whom He already knows will choose the unbelief (*kufr*). For al-Zamakhsharī, belief or unbelief is not pre-ordained rather it is the peoples’ own choice. Al-Zamakhsharī quotes the last words of the above verse that: “You will surely be questioned concerning that which you used to do” (*wa la-tus‘alunna ‘ammā kuntum ta‘malūn*) as a proof of human responsibility. He mentions that if God had forced people to believe or disbelieve, then there is no rationale for questioning the people about their deeds.⁸⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī’s interpretation of the verse: “Our Lord, do not make our hearts swerve after You have guided us and bestow on us Your mercy” (*rabbanā lā tuzigh qulubana ba‘da idh hadaytanā wa hab lanā min ladunka raḥma*)⁸⁶ is that “Our Lord, do not test us with trials in which our hearts may deviate from the truth and guide us to your religion and do not withhold the favors which have

⁸² Qur’ān, 18: 17.

⁸³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 570 – 71.

⁸⁴ Qur’ān, 16: 93.

⁸⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 470.

⁸⁶ Qur’ān, 3: 8.

been bestowed upon us.”⁸⁷ It is clear from his interpretation that he emphasizes free human will. The deviation of the heart from the truth which is an evil thing is not being attributed to God because He is not directly responsible for unbelief.

4 Sealing of the hearts (*khatm al-qulūb*)

The sealing of the heart is one of the main issues in the Mu‘tazilite theology, since it is against the principle of justice (*‘adl*). The following verse states that: “God has sealed their hearts and their hearing, and on their sight is a veil. (*khatama Allāhu ‘alā qulūbihim wa ‘alā sam‘ihim wa ‘alā abṣārihim ghishāwun wa lahum ‘adhābu ‘azīm*).”⁸⁸

Al-Zamakhsharī’s interpretation of “seal” (*khatm*) and “conceal” (*katm*) belongs to the same category of words which are used in conjunction with each other. For instance, when a contract or deed is finalized it is sealed with a “signet” (*khātim*) to conceal and cover so that one may not have access to its contents. He states that neither “seal” (*khatm*) nor “cover” (*taghshia*) has been used in a literal sense but “metaphorically” (*majāzan*). He further elaborates that linking of “sealing their hearts” to God is “evil” (*qabīḥ*) and God is above doing any evil act. He quotes the following verses in support of his interpretation: “I (God) am not unjust to My servants” (*wa mā anā bi-ẓallāmin lil-‘abīd*)⁸⁹ “We never do wrong to people, but they do wrong to themselves” (*wa mā ẓalamnā hum wa lākin kānū hum al-ẓālimīn*)⁹⁰ and “God never enjoins indecency” (*inna Allāh lā ya’mur bil-faḥshā*).⁹¹

Al-Zamakhsharī gives the following reasons in his interpretation of this verse. First, it is due to the unbelievers’ persistence in denying the truth that God informs them that their hearts have been sealed. The seal is a consequence of the unbelievers’ deeds and it is not pre-ordained. Second, seal should be interpreted metaphorically, since their hearts are empty of intelligence (*fiṭan*) like the hearts of the animals. God does not want to prevent them from believing or to force them not to believe because He is above all these things. Third, in a real sense, Satan is the one who seals the hearts of the unbelievers. God has ascribed the seal to Himself because He is the one who empowered Satan or the unbelievers to do so. Fourth, since there is no possibility of them being believers except

⁸⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 529.

⁸⁸ Qur’ān, 2: 7.

⁸⁹ Qur’ān, 50: 29.

⁹⁰ Qur’ān, 43: 76.

⁹¹ Qur’ān, 7: 28.

by the force and the constraint (*al-qasr wa al-iljā*'), God expressed their "impossibility" with "*khatm*" due to persistence in their disbelief. Fifth, there is a possible meaning which involves an ironic response. The unbelievers say sarcastically that, "Our hearts are veiled from what you call us to, and in our ears is heaviness. Between us and you there is a veil. So act (your way), we are acting (ours)." (*wa qālū qlūbunā fī akinnatin mimmā tad'ūnā ilayhi wa fī ādhāninā waq-run wa min bayninā wa baynika ḥijāb fa'mal innanā 'āmilūn*).⁹² Similarly, God responds to them ironically that, "The unbelievers among the 'people of the Book' and the polytheists would never desist (from false beliefs) until the clear proof come to them." (*lam yakuni al-ladhīna kafarū min ahlil-kitābi wal-mushrikīna munfakkīna ḥattā tā'tiyahum al-bayyīna*).⁹³

What is the nature of Satan's power upon the human beings and to what extent can he lead them astray? Al-Zamakhsharī answers this question in his interpretation of the verse "When the issue has been settled, Satan shall say: 'Surely, God made you a promise of truth and I made you a promise, but did not keep it. I had no power over you except to call you, and you responded to my call. So, do not blame me, but blame yourselves. I cannot help you nor can you help me. I deny your having associated me earlier (with God).'"⁹⁴ His argument is that a man chooses either "mischief" (*shaqāwa*) or "felicity" (*sa'āda*) and gets it. There is neither any role of God except "enabling" (*tamkīn*) him, nor of Satan except embellishment (*taz'īn*) of evil deeds. If the matter would be as the Mujbirites⁹⁵ claim, Satan would say: "Do not blame me and not yourself because God decreed upon you the unbelief and He forcibly imposed it."⁹⁶

The position of al-Zamakhsharī can be better understood when it is compared with that of al-Ṭabarī. According to him, the sealing (*al-khatm*) means the impression (*al-ṭab*'), and the seal (*al-khātim*) means the impression with a stamp or signet (*al-ṭābi*'). The sealing of the hearts (*al-khatm 'alā al-qulūb*) means the impression upon it, its closure and its effacement due to sins and disobedience.

Al-Ṭabarī provides three interpretations of this verse. The first interpretation is based on the traditions of Mujāhid b. Jabr. According to one of the traditions,

⁹² Qur'ān, 41: 5.

⁹³ Qur'ān, 98: 1; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 164–69.

⁹⁴ Qur'ān, 14: 22.

⁹⁵ The Mujbirites are those who hold the doctrine of *jabr* (compulsion), meaning that man does not really act but only God. The Mu'tazilites applied it, usually in the form of Mujbirites to the Traditionists. Al-Zamakhsharī often uses it in his exegesis of *al-Kashshāf* against his adversaries. See Montgomery Watt, "Djabriyya or Mudjibira," *ET*, 2: 365.

⁹⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 374–75.

the heart is similar to an open hand, when a person commits a sin a part of it is closed up, when he commits another sin it is further closed up, and it continues until it is impressed with a seal. The second tradition describes, that sins surround the heart from all directions until they merge around it, and this merging is called the seal. The third tradition states that the stain (*al-rāna*) is less serious than the impress (*al-ṭabʿ*), and the impress is less serious than the locks (*al-aqfāl*) and the locks are the most severe than all of them.

The second interpretation of the sealing of hearts refers to “their arrogance and turning away to listening to the truth they were summoned to” (*takabbaruhum wa-iʾrāḍuhum ʿan al-istimāʾ limā daʿaw ilayhi min al-ḥaqq*). Thus, it is said that someone is deaf to the word addressed to him, and because of being too proud and arrogant refuses to listen and understand it.

The third interpretation is illustrated by a tradition of the Prophet reported by Abū Hurayra which states that when a believer commits a sin there is a black spot in his heart. If he repents and renounces it, and seeks forgiveness, his heart will be polished. But if he compounds his sins the black spot grows bigger until his heart is locked, and this is the rust (*rān*) about which God mentions: “No, in fact, their hearts have been rusted with what they earned” (*kallā bal rāna ʿalā qulūbihim mā kānū yaksibūn*).⁹⁷ The Prophet explained that when sins are accumulated in the heart they lock it, and after that a seal which is the imprint from God is set upon it. The belief cannot enter the hearts of such people, unless God breaks His seal.

Al-Ṭabarī mentions that God distinguishes between seal (*khatm*), which is put upon a person’s hearing and heart, while veil (*ghishāwa*), that is placed upon one’s sight. He quotes that: “God could have sealed your hearts if He pleased (*fa in yashāʾ Allāhu yakhtim ʿalā qalbik*)”,⁹⁸ and “He seals his ears and heart, and covers over his eyes with veil” (*khatama ʿala samʿihi wa-qalbihi wa jaʿala ʿala baṣrihi ghishāwatan*).⁹⁹

Al-Ṭabarī interprets the verse: “No soul is burdened beyond its capacity (*lā tukallafu nafsun illā wusʿahā*)”,¹⁰⁰ that a person is not imposed with obligations for which he is not capable, that is, neither he is oppressed nor strained. He states that the ignorant Qādarites presume the meaning of this verse is that a soul is not burdened with obligations except when it has the power that enables him to perform an act of obedience (*al-qudra min al-ṭāʾāt*). Al-Ṭabarī quotes the

⁹⁷ Qurʾān, 83: 14.

⁹⁸ Qurʾān, 42: 24.

⁹⁹ Qurʾān, 45: 23.

¹⁰⁰ Qurʾān, 2: 233.

verse: “Consider how they invent the similes for you and so go astray, and then cannot find their path”,¹⁰¹ and states that this verse is a proof against them. Their claim is absurd and its incorrectness is obvious. It is therefore, certain that when God mentions that He has burdened the persons according to their capabilities (*annahu kallafa al-nufūs min wus’ihā*), unlike that He imposes something upon a person for which he has not the ability to achieve (*annahu kallafahā mim mā lā tastaṭī’u ilayhi al-sabīl*).

This verse clearly proves the falseness of the claim of those who deny that God imposes burden (*taklīf*) on a person what can only be accomplished through His help, because God states that He sets a seal on the hearts and ears, and veil on the sight of unbelievers among His creation. However, He neither abolishes the burden from them, nor relieves anyone from duties. He does not absolve them in anything which they do against His obedience because of a seal He has put on their hearts and ears, and a veil on their sight. Rather, He states that there will be a great punishment for all of them who abandoned obedience to Him which He has commanded and prohibited them.¹⁰²

5 God does not will any evil but good (*anna Allāh lā yurīd sharr bal yurīd al-khayr*)

The Mu‘tazilites believe that God does not will any evil and does not command it for His creation. Al-Zamakhsharī’s interpretation of the following eight verses indicates that he follows the Mu‘tazilite doctrine.

First verse: When your Lord said to the angels: “I shall make a vicegerent on the earth,” they said: “Will you place one therein who would create disorder and shed blood, while we proclaim Your praise and glorify Your sanctity?” He said: “I know what you do not know.” (*wa idh qāla rabbuka lil-malā’ikati innī jā’ilun fī al-arḍi khalīfa qālū ataj’alu fīhā man yufsidu fīhā wa yasfiku al-dimā wa naḥnu nu-sabbihū bi-ḥamdika wa nuqaddisu laka qāla innī a’lamu mā lā ta’lamūn*).¹⁰³

Al-Zamakhsharī’s interpretation of “Will you place one therein who would create disorder” (*ataj’alu fī-hā man yufsidu fī-hā*) is that God will send human beings instead of angels who will commit sins, but He does not do anything except which is good and He wills only the good.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ Qur’ān, 17: 48; 25: 9.

¹⁰² Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi’ al-Bayān*, 1: 112–15, 2: 496, 15: 96, 18: 184–86, 30: 97–100; Gilliot, *Exégèse*, 272–76; J. Cooper, *Commentary on the Qur’ān*, 1: 109–13.

¹⁰³ Qur’ān, 2: 30.

¹⁰⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 251–53.

Second verse: “O God, Master of the Kingdom, You give the kingdom to whom You please and You take away the kingdom (power) from whom You will. You honor whom You please and humble whom You please. All goodness is in Your hand. Indeed, You have the power over all things.” (*allāhumma mālik al-mulki tu’ti al-mulka man tashā’u wa tanzi’u al-mulka mimman tashā’ wa tu’izzu man tashā’u wa tuzhillu man tashā’u bi-yadika al-khayr innaka ‘alā kulli shay’in qadīr*).¹⁰⁵

He interprets that the goodness (*al-khayr*) is that the believers are driven towards good things and whosoever rejects them is an unbeliever. All the goodness is in His authority and He gives it to His friends against the will of His enemies. All the acts of God whether beneficial or harmful originate from His wisdom (*ḥikma*) and goodness (*maṣlah*) and all the things He does are for the betterment of the people.¹⁰⁶

Third verse: “And when We desire to destroy a town We command its people of luxury, but as they transgress therein Our sentence against them is pronounced, and We destroy them utterly.” (*wa idhā aradnā an nuhlika qaryatan amrnā mutrafihā fa fasaqū fihā fa ḥaqqā ‘alayhā al-qawlu fa dammarnāhā tadmīrā*).¹⁰⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets “We command” (*amarnā*) in a figurative sense. He says that the people transgressed despite their being granted benefaction and kindness so that they may become good and grateful, but they indulged in sinfulness and moral depravity. When they became transgressors they were destroyed completely because of their transgression.¹⁰⁸

Fourth verse: “O mankind, worship your Lord who created you, as well as those before you, so that you may become righteous.” (*yā ayyuha al-nāsu ‘budū rabbakum al-ladhī khalaqakum wa al-ladhīna min qablikum la’llakum tattaqūn*).¹⁰⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets “Who created you, as well as those before you, so that you may become righteous” (*al-ladhī khalaqakum wa al-ladhīna min qablikum la’llakum tattaqūn*) that it does not mean that the believers should be righteous only in the hope of God. “Perhaps” (*la’llā*) in this verse has been used figuratively not in reality because God created human beings for the worship and performing of obligations imposed upon them. He provided them with intelligence, desires and guidance and bestowed upon them free choice. He expects

¹⁰⁵ Qur’ān, 3: 26.

¹⁰⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 542–44.

¹⁰⁷ Qur’ān, 17: 16.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 500–501.

¹⁰⁹ Qur’ān, 2: 21.

from them righteousness, but they are free to make a choice between obedience and sinfulness.¹¹⁰

Fifth verse: “And each sign that We showed them was greater than the other. Then We seized them with punishment so that they might turn back in repentance.” (*wa ma nurīhim min āyatin illā hiya akbaru min ’ukhtihā wa akhadhnāhum bi-al-’adhābi la’llahum yarji’ūn*).¹¹¹

Al-Zamakhsharī says that “they might turn back in repentance” (*la’llahum yarji’ūn*) means that they may return from disbelief to belief. God does not will to force them rather it is a choice of the people to adopt either belief or unbelief.¹¹²

Sixth verse: He (Satan) said: “My Lord, since You have misguided me I will make the earth attractive to them and lead them all astray.” (*qāla rabbi bimā aghwaytanī l’uzayyinanna lahum fī al-arḍi wa l’ughwiynnahum ajma’in*).¹¹³

Al-Zamakhsharī says that in the verse, “My Lord, since You have misguided me” (*rabbi bi-mā aghwaytanī*) has been referred to God but it is not what it means in the real sense, rather it has been used figuratively. When God commanded Satan to bow down before Adam he became proud and arrogant, whereas God wanted to reward him if he had chosen humility and obedience.¹¹⁴

Seventh verse: Satan said: “Since You led me astray, I shall lie in wait for them along Your straight path.” (*qāla fa-bimā aghwaytanī la aq’udanna lahum širāṭaka al-mustaqīm*).¹¹⁵

He interprets that “Since You led me astray” (*fa-bi-mā aghwaytanī*) has been used figuratively by referring it to God. God is only the “causer” (*musabbib*) not the doer (*fā’il*).¹¹⁶

Eighth verse: When they commit an indecency, they say: “We found our fathers doing it, and God commanded us to do the same.” Say: “God does not command indecency. Do you attribute to God what you do not know?” (*wa idhā fa’alū fāḥishatan qālū wajadnā ’alyhā ābā’nā wa Allāhu amaranā bihā qul inna Allāha lā yā’muru bil-fāḥshā’i ’ataqūlūna ’ala Allāhi mā lā ta’lamūn*).¹¹⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī defines “indecency” (*fāḥisha*) as the one which is repugnant among the sins. He interprets the verse as those who commit indecencies justify

110 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 209–14.

111 Qur’ān, 43: 48.

112 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 447–48.

113 Qur’ān, 15: 39.

114 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 405–407.

115 Qur’ān, 7: 16.

116 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 427–31.

117 Qur’ān, 7: 28.

them by saying that their forefathers used to do it because God commanded it and they are following them. Both of them, i.e. they and their forefathers, are false in their allegation and fabricating lies against God. God is free from ugly things (*qabīḥ*) and He does not command His servants to perform indecencies.¹¹⁸

6 Conclusion

The Mu‘tazilites called themselves “people of the justice and the unity” (*ahl al-‘adl wa al-tawḥīd*), and emphasized God’s justice and His goodness towards human beings. Al-Zamakhsharī states that God is just and desires good and His inherent justice prevents Him from inflicting any harm or injustice to the people. It is due to people’s own good or bad deeds that their destiny is decided by God. The Qur’ān exhorts people repeatedly to repent and turn away from evil deeds and thus work for their own salvation. He quotes from the Qur’ān that “those who fulfill their covenant with God” (*alladhīna yūfūna bi ‘ahdi Allāhi*), persevere in seeking the way of their Lord, remain steadfast in prayers and ward off evil with good (*yadra’ūna bi al-ḥasanāti al-sayyi’āt*), for them is the recompense of paradise. While “those who break their covenant with God” (*alladhīna yanquḍūna bi ‘ahdi Allāhi*), and spread corruption on the earth (*yufsidūna fī al-ard*), for them is an evil abode.¹¹⁹

In order to avoid attributing of evil to God, al-Zamakhsharī maintains that “God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity.”¹²⁰ His view is based on the Qur’ānic verse that God is not unjust to His servants.¹²¹ For al-Zamakhsharī, God’s praising Himself that He could not do evil to His servants, would have no sense if He imposed burden on a soul beyond his capacity. In addition, God is just and “enjoins justice” (*yā’muru bi al-‘adl*),¹²² therefore, “He would impose upon them which is really below their capacity” (*fa ja‘ala mā faraḍahu ‘alayhim wāqī’an taḥta ṭāqatahum*).¹²³

¹¹⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 436–37.

¹¹⁹ Qur’ān, 13: 20–25.

¹²⁰ Qur’ān, 2: 233, 286; 6: 152; 7: 42; 23: 62; 65: 7.

¹²¹ Qur’ān, 50: 29.

¹²² Qur’ān, 16: 90.

¹²³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3: 464.

Chapter 6 Third Principle: The Promise and the Threat (*al-wa'd wa al-wa'id*)

The Majority of the Mu'tazilites believe that it is incumbent upon God to carry His "promise and threat" (*al-wa'd wa al-wa'id*) because He is just. God promises recompense to those who obey Him and threatens punishment to those who disobey Him. They are unanimous that man has power over his good and bad deeds and he is the creator of these actions. It is because of this reason that he deserves reward or punishment in the hereafter for what he does in this world.¹

In support of the principle of "the promise and the threat" (*al-wa'd wa al-wa'id*), the Mu'tazilites quote the verses of the Qur'an that "God has promised the believing men and women gardens beneath which the streams flow, where they will abide forever (*wa'ad Allāhu al-mu'minīna wa al-mu'mināti jannātin tajrī min taḥtihā al-anhāru khālīdīna fī-hā*)"² and "God has promised the hypocritical men and women and the unbelievers, the fire of Hell, where they will abide forever" (*wa'ad Allāhu al-munāfiqīna wa al-munāfiqāti wa al-kuffāra nāra jahannama khālīdīna fī-hā*).³ So, in these two verses God clearly states that God will reward the believers and punish the unbelievers.

To fulfill His justice, God keeps the records of all good and bad deeds, small or great, that the human beings performed in this world. According to the Qur'an, everything whether small or great is written down and whosoever has done even an atom's weight of good or bad deeds will see that on the Day of Judgment.⁴

Al-Ash'arī does not agree with the Mu'tazilites' principle regarding "the promise and the threat" (*al-wa'd wa al-wa'id*) and states that conclusive judgments cannot be derived from the literal meanings of the verses as quoted and interpreted by them. He contends that "One has no more right to say that the threat-verses are universal and the others particular than one has to reverse the statement and to say that the threat-verses are particular and the others universal" (*wa laysa qawl man qāla inna al-āyāt 'amma fī al-wa'id āmma wa al-āyāt al-'ukhar khāṣṣa 'ulā min qawl qālab qalb al-qīṣṣa wa ja'ala āyāt al-wa'id khāṣṣa wa al-āyāt al-'ukhar 'amma*).⁵

1 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 135–36; 611–12; al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:29.

2 Qur'an, 9:72.

3 Qur'an, 9:68.

4 Qur'an, 18:49; 54:53; 99: 7–8.

5 Al-Ash'arī, *al-Luma'*, 78–79; Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 163–65.

According to al-Zamakhsharī, if a person obeys or disobeys, he deserves praise and reward or blame and punishment, unless one of the things is cancelled by the other or he repents. He states that rationally a punishment can be cancelled by the divine forgiveness and the Prophet's intercession. However, he adds that the revelation prohibits it (*anna al-sam' māni*).⁶

1 The Concept of Constraint (*iljā*)

The concept of “constraint” (*iljā*) is intended to solve the issue of the discrepancy between what God wills people to do and what they actually do. The Mu'tazilites, except Abū Musā al-Murdār, maintain that: “It is not possible that God should will the acts of disobedience in any manner and command that which He does not will to be and forbid that which He wills to be. God sometimes wills that which is not, and things have come to be which He has not willed. However, He has the power to prevent that which he does not will and to constrain humans to perform what He wills” (*innahu lā yajūza an yakūna Allāhu subḥānahu murīdan lil-ma'āṣi 'alā wajhi min al-wujūh an yakūna mawjūdān wa lā yajūza an ya'mura bi-mā lā yurīdu an yakūna wa anna yanhā 'ammā yurīdu kawnuhu wa anna Allāhu subḥānahu qad arāda mā lam yakun wa kāna mā lam yurid wa annahu qādirun 'alā al-man'a mimma lā yurīdu wa an yulji'a ilā mā arāda*).⁷

Michael Schwarz states that,

He ('Abd al-Jabbār) distinguishes between what God wills of men “by way of constraint and force” (*'alā jihat al-iljā wa-al-ikrāh*) and what He wills that they should do as a result of their own choice, as voluntary acts of obedience (*'alā jihat al-ikhtiyār wa-al-ṭaw'*). Actions (“objects of power” *maqḍūr*) of the first type must necessarily come into being when He puts the constraint (*iljā*) into effect. But if voluntary actions of the kind He wills the *mu-kallafūn*⁸ to perform are not performed, this does not necessitate any weakness or defect on His part. Neither do voluntary actions which come about against His will infringe His omnipotence.⁹ This is so because men's voluntary actions are their exclusive “objects of

⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *Minhāj*, 36, 73. It may be pointed out that here al-Zamakhsharī emphasizes rational argument over the revelation. The Qur'ān mentions at various places that God is forgiving and pardoning. In the verse 42:25, it is said that “It is He who accepts the repentance of His creation, pardons the evil deeds” (*wa huwa alladhī yaqbalu al-tawba 'an 'ibādihi wa-ya'fu 'an al-sayyi'āt*). See for forgiveness (*'afw*): Qur'ān, 2:52, 187; 3:152, 155; 4:149, 153; 5:95, 101; and 9:43, and for intercession (*shafā'a*): Qur'ān, 20:109; 34:23; and 39:44.

⁷ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 512.

⁸ “Those obliged by the Law,” that is all sane adults.

⁹ 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 6 II: 257.

power” and cannot reasonably be within God’s power (*lā yaṣīḥḥ an yakūna maqdūran lahu*) ... although God theoretically has the power to do evil, He will never do it, that is, He will always choose not to do it. This is so because He knows evil for what it is and knows that He can do without it. He thus resembles a person constrained to perform a certain action. Such a person will also never choose to act differently despite the fact that it would be in his power to do so.¹⁰

‘Abd al-Jabbār also points out that it is always considerations of benefit or avoidance of harm which “constrain” a person. God cannot enjoy benefit or suffering or harm. Hence He is never constrained and He deserves praise even for those actions which He inevitably performs.¹¹ When God chooses to perform good actions He does so because these actions are good and not because of any benefit to Him. Hence, He is not constrained; and therefore, He is praiseworthy.¹²

Al-Ash‘arī argues that according to the Mu‘tazilites, God wills that men should believe voluntarily (*ṭaw‘an*) and if they do so then they deserve to be rewarded. However, if God were to constrain them (*alja‘ahum*) they would neither be believers nor deserving reward. Therefore, God’s omnipotence is compromised because it would not achieve what He wills, that they believe in the manner in which He wills them to believe.¹³

The concept of “constraint” (*iljā*) does not resolve the issue of discrepancy between what God wills men to do and what they actually do. According to ‘Abd al-Jabbār, God has power to accomplish only those acts which can possibly be in His power (*lā yaṣīḥḥ an yakūna maqdūran lahu*)¹⁴ and these do not include the objects of man’s power, i.e. the action which He granted them power to accomplish. It leads into a conflict between God’s power and man’s acquired power; and therefore, God’s omnipotence is infringed upon and compromised.

2 The Concept of Nullification and Atonement (*al-iḥbāt wa al-takfīr*)

The concept of “the nullification and the atonement” (*al-iḥbāt wa al-takfīr*)¹⁵ is related to obedience (*ṭā‘a*) and disobedience (*ma‘ṣiya*). ‘Abd al-Jabbār defines

¹⁰ ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 6 II: 268, 6 I: 185–90. See Schwarz, Notion of *iljā*, 420, 426–27.

¹¹ ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 6 I: 201–2; 11: 399–400.

¹² ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 6 I: 13–14.

¹³ McCarthy, *Theology of Al-Ash‘arī*, 38.

¹⁴ ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 6 II: 268.

¹⁵ Lupti Ibrahim, “The Concept of *Iḥbāt* and *Takfīr* according to az-Zamakhsharī and al-Bayḍawī,” *Die Welt des Orients*, 11 (1980):117–21.

it as a person under obligation (*mukallaf*) deserves to be rewarded if the act of obedience is greater than the act of disobedience, and the smaller disobedience will be removed, that is, nullified by the greater obedience.¹⁶ In other words, a person's good deeds and bad deeds are weighed; if a person's good deeds are more than his bad deeds, the punishment of the bad deeds is cancelled and he will receive eternal reward; on the other hand, if his bad deeds are more than good deeds, reward of the good deeds is cancelled and he will get eternal punishment. As for minor sins, the Mu'tazilites are of the view that such sins would be weighed against one's good deeds and cancelled out through them as long as the good deeds outweighed the bad deeds. However, 'Abbād b. Sulaymān al-Ṣumayrī is of the view that the punishment of the sins can only be forgiven by repentance.¹⁷

The Mu'tazilites are of the opinion that when a believer who is obedient to God and repentant departs from this world he deserves not only reward (*thawāb*) and recompense (*'iwad*) but also grace (*tafaḍḍul*) from God. However, if he departs from this world unrepentant of grave sins which he committed, he deserves eternal Hell fire, but his punishment will be lesser than that of the unbelievers.¹⁸

The majority of the Mu'tazilites denies the possibility that God will pardon an unrepentant sinner because He has informed the human beings that He will punish the sinners and it is not appropriate not to carry out His threat; rather it is necessary for Him to punish them.¹⁹ However, some of them are of the view that there is no doubt that God has the ability to pardon, because the Qur'an states that: "He will pardon whom He pleases and punish whom He wills" (*yaghfiru li-man yashā'u wa yu'adhdhibu man yashā'*).²⁰ In fact, according to 'Abd al-Jabbār, pardon is only conceivable where there has previously been repentance on the part of the unbeliever or the sinner (*inna al-maghfirā bi-sharṭi al-tawba*),²¹ and God is obliged to accept this repentance (*qabūl tawba wājib*).²² If a person repents, the Prophet Muḥammad will make intercession on his behalf on the Day of Judgment at which the sinner can expect God's forgiveness.

Al-Zamakhsharī, in conformity with the Mu'tazilites view, considers that *takfīr* is the removal of a punishment from a person who deserves to be punished

16 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 624.

17 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 625.

18 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:31.

19 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 644.

20 Qur'ān, 2:284; 3:129; 5:18, 40; 48:14.

21 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mutashābih al-Qur'ān*, ed. 'Adnān Muḥammad Zarzūr (Cairo: Dār al-Turāth, 1969), 2:596.

22 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Mughnī*, 14:337–38.

either by means of increasing his/her reward or due to his/her repentance which is evident by his interpretation of the following four verses.

First verse: “Announce the good news to those who believe and have done good deeds, they will have gardens under which river flow.” (*wa bashshirī al-ladhīna āmanū wa ‘amilū al-ṣāliḥāti anna lahum jannātīn tajrī min taḥtiḥā al-anḥār*).²³

In his interpretation, al-Zamakhsharī says that God gives good news to that person who combines his belief with righteous deeds from the acts of worship and avoids sins. There are two things which can deprive a person of his reward (*thawāb*): unbelief (*kufī*) and major sins (*kabā’ir*). Al-Zamakhsharī quotes that “If you associate (anyone with God) all your deeds will be wasted and certainly you will be one of the losers” (*la’in ashrakta la-yaḥbaṭanna ‘amaluka wa la-takunanna min al-khāsirīn*).²⁴ He emphasizes that this verse was addressed to the Prophet Muḥammad who is the most noble and honored amongst all the human beings, not to associate others with Him, otherwise his “deeds will be wasted” (*la-yaḥbaṭanna ‘amaluk*). However, this verse is a hypothetical one and it is certainly impossible for the Prophet to associate anyone with God. He interprets “and certainly you will be one of the losers” (*wa-la-takūnanna min al-khāsirīn*) as “it is possible that you may be loser due to futility of deeds”²⁵ (*yaḥtamilu wa latakunanna min al-khāsirīn bi-sabab ḥubūṭ al-‘amal*).²⁶

Second verse: “O believers, obey God and obey the Prophet and do not waste your deeds.” (*yā ayyuha al-ladhīna āmanū aṭī’ū Allāha wa aṭī’ū al-rasūla wala tubṭilū a’mālakum*).²⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets, “And do not waste your deeds” (*wa-lā tubṭilū a’mālakum*) as “Do not nullify pious deeds by committing major sins” (*lā tuḥbiṭū al-tā’āt bi-al-kabā’ir*). God says that: “O you who believe, do not raise your voices above the voice of the Prophet, and do not speak loudly to him as you do with one another lest your deeds are nullified while you are unaware” (*yā ayyuhā al-ladhīna āmanū lā tarfa’ū aṣwātakum fawqa ṣawt al-nabī wa lā tajharū lahu bi al-qawl ka-jahri ba’ḍikum li-ba’ḍin an taḥbaṭa a’mālakum wa antum lā tash’urūn*).²⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī says that, “When the Prophet speaks and you speak, it is necessary that you should not raise your voice above the voice of the Prophet and avoid looking at him directly” (*idhā naṭaqa wa-naṭaqtum fa-*

²³ Qur’ān, 2:25.

²⁴ Qur’ān, 39:65.

²⁵ *ḥubūṭ al-‘amal* can be translated as “wasted deeds” or “deeds in vain.”

²⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:319–20.

²⁷ Qur’ān, 47:33.

²⁸ Qur’ān, 49:2.

‘alaykum an lā tablaghū aṣwātikum warā’ al-ḥadd al-ladhī yablaghahu bi-ṣawtihi wa-an taghaḍḍū min-hā). Furthermore, do not call him by his name Muḥammad or Aḥmad but call him with respect keeping in mind his status as a Prophet.²⁹

Third verse: “If you avoid the major sins that you are forbidden, We shall remit your bad deeds, and let you enter an honorable place.” (in *tajtanibū kabā’ir mā tunhawna ‘anhu nukaffir ‘ankum sayyi’ātikum wa nudkhilkum mudkhalan karīmā*).³⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets that “major sins that you are forbidden” (*kabā’ir mā tunhawna ‘an-hu*) are those sins which God and the Prophet have forbidden. He interprets “We shall remit your evil deeds” (*nukaffir ‘an-kum sayyi’ātikum*) as “We will efface from you the punishment of committing minor sins by enhancing the reward as a consequence of your avoiding the major sins and patience.”³¹

Fourth verse: “And those who believe and do the righteous deeds We will remit their sins and We will give them a reward better than their deeds.” (*wal-ladhīna āmanū wa ‘amilū al-ṣālihāti la-nukaffiranna ‘anhum sayyi’ātihum wa la-najziyannahum aḥsana al-ladhī kānū ya‘malūn*).³²

Al-Zamakhsharī considers that this verse is intended either for the righteous believers or for the polytheists who became believers. He interprets that if it is in the context of righteous believers who committed some minor sins and their misdeeds were covered by good deeds then their punishment of the minor sins will be compensated by the reward of the good deeds and they will be recompensed better than what they used to do. If it is for the new believers and they performed the good deeds then God will efface their previous sins, unbelief and disobedience and will compensate them with better reward since they have become the Muslims.³³

3 Repentance (*tawba*)

The Mu’tazilites differ regarding the forgiveness of the sins. Most of the Mu’tazilites consider that the grave sinners are doomed to eternal damnation³⁴ and in support of their assertion, they quote many verses of the Qur’ān which empha-

²⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:556–57.

³⁰ Qur’ān, 4:31.

³¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:62–64.

³² Qur’ān, 29:7.

³³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4:536–38.

³⁴ ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 666; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Faḍl*, 210, 350; Schmitdke, *Mu’tazilite Creed*, 76.

size that God will punish the evil-doers and those committing sins will abide in Hell forever.³⁵ However, other Mu'tazilites are of the opinion that the Qur'ān also emphasizes that God accepts the repentance of His servants and encourages them to turn to Him in sincere repentance.³⁶

With regard to the minor sins, there are three opinions amongst the Mu'tazilites. First, God forgives by His "favor" (*tafaḍḍul*) the minor sins if one avoids the major sins. Second, God forgives the minor sins only if one avoids the major sins with certitude (*istiḥqāq*). Third, God does not forgive the minor sins without repentance.³⁷

'Abd al-Jabbār mentions that there are three possibilities for an obligated person who observes the precepts of religion: either his good deeds exceed his bad deeds (*ṭā'ātihi akthar min ma'āṣihi*), or his bad deeds are in excess of his good deeds (*ma'āṣihi akthar min ṭā'ātihi*), or they both are equal (*yakūnā muta-sawīyan*). He rules out the third possibility due to the differences of opinions for its happening, and discusses only the first two possibilities. If a person's good deeds are more than his bad deeds, there would be no acceptance of his repentance from the rational point of view, though he may be forgiven according to the Prophetic traditions. Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī believes that the repentance is acceptable both from rational point of view and in accordance with the Prophetic traditions. However, Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī disagrees and states that it is acceptable only in accordance with the traditions. If a person's bad deeds exceed his good deeds, then he is considered a grave sinner, and it is necessary for him to repent for the omissions of his sins and punishment. The manner in which it can be achieved is "that he should be remorseful upon his disgraceful deeds and have a firm determination not to repeat acts like them" (*a yandim 'alā al-qabīḥ wa ya'zam 'alā an lā ya'ūd ilā amthālihi*).³⁸

'Abd al-Jabbār further states that "the remorse" (*al-nadm*) and "the determination" (*al-'azm*) should be connected together until the repentance is a "sound repentance" (*tawba ṣaḥīḥa*). In case, if there is remorse and no determination or there is a determination but no remorse, then it would not be "sincere repentance" (*tawbatun naṣūḥa*).³⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī, in conformity with the Mu'tazilites' doctrine states that "repentance" (*tawba*) is the only way to be forgiven by God for a person who commits major sins. If he dies unrepentant he will abide in the fire forever. His inter-

³⁵ Qur'ān, 4:14, 82:14.

³⁶ Qur'ān, 4:16, 9:104, 42:25, 66:8.

³⁷ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 271–72.

³⁸ 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 789.

³⁹ 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 791.

pretation of the following five verses regarding “repentance” (*tawba*) is as follows.

First two verses: “Those who do not believe and transgress God will not forgive them, nor guide them to any path except to Hell, abiding therein forever.” (*inna al-ladhīna kafarū wa ḡalamū lam yakunī Allāhu li-yaghfirā lahum wa la li-yahdiahum ṭarīqā illā ṭarīqa jahannama khālīdīna fī-hā abadā*).⁴⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī states that this refers to the unbelievers and those who commit major sins and there is no difference between them because both of them are united between unbelief (*kufṛ*) and disobedience (*maʿāṣī*) and “they would not be forgiven except with repentance” (*lā yaghfiru la-humā illā bil-tawba*). There will be no grace bestowed upon them and they will be destined to Hell forever.⁴¹

Second verse: “Say (Prophet Muḡammad): O My servants, those of you who have acted against your interests should not despair of God’s Mercy. Surely God forgives all sins. He is all-Forgiving and all-Merciful.” (*qul yā ʿibādī al-ladhīna asrafū ʿalā anfusihim lā taqnaṭū min raḡmati Allāh inna Allāha yaghfiru al-dhunūba jamīʿā innahu huwa al-ghafūr al-raḡīm*).⁴²

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets “Surely God forgives all sins” (*inna Allāh yaghfiru al-dhunūba jamīʿan*) “with the condition of repentance” (*bi-sharṭ al-tawba*).⁴³ He says that the condition of repentance has been mentioned in many verses of the Qurʾān, though it is not stated in this verse. He also mentions that in the reading of Ibn ʿAbbās and Ibn Masʿūd, they added “whomsoever He wills” (*li-man yashā*) after “forgives all sins” (*yaghfiru al-dhunūba jamīʿan*) to the original verse. He states that the purpose of “whomsoever He wills” (*bi-man yashā*) is “whosoever repents” (*man tāba*). He gives a reason for this interpretation of *tawba* that the “will of God is dependent upon His wisdom and His justice not His dominion and His power” (*mashīʾ Allāh tābīʾ li-ḡikmatihī wa-ʿadlihi lā li-mulkihi wa-jabrūtihi*).⁴⁴

Third verse: “Your Lord forgives human beings for their wrongdoings and your Lord is truly severe in retribution.” (*wa inna rabbaka la dhū maghfiratin lil-nāsi ʿalā ḡulmihim wa inna rabbaka la shadīdu al-ʿiqāb*).⁴⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets “for their wrongdoings” (*ʿalā ḡulmihim*) as “transgressors for themselves” (*ḡālimīn li-anfusihim*). He interprets it in three different ways: First, God will forgive all the minor sins if one avoids the major sins. Sec-

⁴⁰ Qurʾān, 4:168–69.

⁴¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:180–81.

⁴² Qurʾān, 39:53.

⁴³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:312.

⁴⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:312–13.

⁴⁵ Qurʾān, 13:6.

ond, God will forgive the major sins “subject to the condition of repentance” (*bi-sharṭ al-tawba*). Third, God’s “forgiveness” (*maghfira*) means concealment of one’s sins and delay in punishment.⁴⁶

Fourth verse: “O believers, Repent to God all of you so that you may be successful.” (*wa tubū ilā Allāhi jamī’an ayyuha al-mu’minūna la’llakum tufliḥūn*).⁴⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī states that those believers who commit minor sins and make mistakes are advised to repent and ask God for His forgiveness, with the hope of success and prosperity if their repentance is accepted and they are forgiven by God.⁴⁸

Fifth verse: “He who repents and does the righteous deeds returns back to God by way of repentance.” (*wa man tāba wa ‘amila ṣālihan fa innahu yatūbu ila Allāhi matābā*).⁴⁹

According to al-Zamakhsharī, a sincere repentant should fulfill three conditions: to relinquish all the sins, to be remorseful and to perform righteous deeds. He says that God loves the repentant and loves those who purify themselves.⁵⁰

4 Forgiveness (*ghufrān*)

The Mu’tazilites agree that God will not forgive a person’s major sins without repentance. Some of them are of the opinion that the minor sins will not be forgiven without repentance also. However, they consider that if someone avoids the major sins, God will forgive the minor sins. They differ about whether it is the right of a person that he should be forgiven after repentance or if it is God’s grace by which He forgives the sins. Abū Hudhayl and his followers believe that those who avoid committing major sins, their minor sins are wiped out by the grace of God, not of their right. Abū ‘Alī-Jubbāī’ differs and he says that just as the reward of good deeds is nullified by committing the major sins, avoiding the major sins results in the forgiveness of minor sins. Al-Zamakhsharī agrees with the majority position of the Mu’tazilites, while regarding the minor sins, he follows Abū ‘Alī-Jubbāī’.

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets the verses which deal with forgiveness, as follows:

⁴⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:334.

⁴⁷ Qur’ān, 24:31.

⁴⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4:289–94.

⁴⁹ Qur’ān, 25:71.

⁵⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4:372–73.

First verse: “God accepts the repentance of those who commit evil in ignorance and then repent immediately after that. God accepts their repentance and God is all-knowing and all-wise.” (*innma al-tawbatu ‘ala Allāhi lil-ladhīna ya‘malūna al-sū‘a bi-jahālatin thumma yatūbūna min qarībīn fa ‘ulā’ika yatūbu Allāhu ‘alayhim wa kāna Allāhu ‘alīman ḥakīma*).⁵¹

Al-Zamakhsharī states that whoever repents to God his repentance is accepted and he is forgiven because the acceptance of repentance and forgiveness is incumbent (*wājib*) upon God. He interprets “God accepts the repentance” (*inna-mā tawba ‘alā Allāh*) that it is as incumbent upon God in the same way as obedience (*ṭa‘āt*) is obligatory upon His servants.⁵²

Second verse: “But repentance is not for those who commit evil deeds until when death comes to one of them, and he says: ‘I now repent;’ nor for those who die as unbelievers. For them, We have prepared a very painful punishment.” (*wa laysati al-tawbatu lil-ladhīna ya‘malūna al-sayyi‘āti ḥattā idhā ḥaḍara aḥadahum al-mawtu qāla innī tubtu al-‘āna wa lā al-ladhīna yamūtūna wa hum kuffār ‘ulā’ika a‘tadnā lahum ‘adhāban alīmā*).⁵³

Al-Zamakhsharī states that if an unbeliever dies without repentance, he will not be forgiven. Similarly, if someone repents at the time of his death, his repentance will not be accepted because approaching death is the first state of the hereafter. It is “like that he is dying as an unbeliever who has lost the opportunity of repentance with certainty” (*fa-kamā anna al-mā‘it ‘alā al-kufr qad fātat al-tawba ‘alā al-yaqīn*).⁵⁴

Third verse: “It is He who accepts repentance of His servants, and pardons the evil deeds and He knows what you do.” (*wa huwa al-ladhī yaqbalu al-tawba-ta ‘an ‘ibādihī wa ya‘fu ‘an al-sayyi‘āti wa ya‘lamu mā taf‘alūn*).⁵⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī states that there are three components of repentance: remorse upon the sins, resolve not to go back to commit sins, and firm determination not to commit sins in future.⁵⁶

Fourth verse: “O you who believe, turn to God in sincere repentance, perhaps your Lord may forgive your evil deeds.” (*yā ayyuha al-ladhīna āmanū tūbū ila Allāhi tawbatan nuṣūḥā ‘asā rabbakum an yukaffira ‘ankum sayyi‘ātikum*).⁵⁷

51 Qur’ān, 4:17.

52 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:44.

53 Qur’ān, 4:18.

54 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:41–4.

55 Qur’ān, 42:25.

56 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:407–8.

57 Qur’ān, 66:8.

Al-Zamakhsharī states that one should make sincere and true repentance so that God may remit sins. Good advice is the distinguishing mark of the penitents who counsel themselves for repentance. They deal with it by eliminating their bad deeds and remorse upon what they have done in the past. They are severely grieved and determined not to revert back on these repulsive deeds.⁵⁸

Fifth verse: “God will not forgive those who associate other gods with Him, but will forgive anything less than that to whom He pleases. And he who associates other gods with God has committed a very grave sin.” (*inna Allāha lā yaghfiru an yushraka bihi wa yaghfiru mā dūna dhālika li-man yashā’ wa man yushrik bi-Allāhi faqad iftarā ithman ‘aẓīmā*).⁵⁹

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets that God may forgive someone who associates other gods with Him, provided that he repented (*li-man tāba*). However, He will not forgive the one who commits major sins except with repentance (*al-kabā’ir illā bi-al-tawba*). He is of the opinion that the fate of the person who commits a major sin and does not repent is the same as that of the person who associates other gods with Him. In the interpretation of this verse, his main emphasis is on “He will forgive anything less than that to whom He pleases” (*wa-yaghfiru mā dūna dhālika li-man yashā’*). He maintains that the first part of the verse that “God will not forgive those who associate other gods with Him” (*inna Allāh lā yaghfiru an yushraka bi-hi*) refers to the person who does not repent, whereas the second part of the verse “He will forgive anything less than that to whom He pleases” (*wa-yaghfiru mā dūna dhālika li-man yashā’*) deals with the person who repents (*li-man tāba*). Al-Zamakhsharī cites an example of a ruler who does not spend even a *dīnār* for one person, but spends a whole treasure for another person if he desires. This means that the ruler does not spend even a dinar for a person whom he thinks does not deserve it, while he is prepared to spend a whole treasure for another person who is in his judgment deserving.⁶⁰

5 Intercession (*shafā’a*)

The Mu’tazilites maintain that intercession may take place in the hereafter, if a person repents before his death. They also believe in it because the word intercession has been mentioned at many places in the Qur’ān. Al-Zamakhsharī also

⁵⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6:162–63.

⁵⁹ Qur’ān, 4:48.

⁶⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:89–90.

believes in intercession but differs from the orthodox point of view, which considers that intercession will be for all the Muslims including those who commit the major sins. In his opinion, intercession is for those to whom “God chooses to increase their reward out of His grace” (*li-man irtaḍa Allāh li-yazdādū tafaḍḍulan*).⁶¹

His interpretation of the following verses is in accordance with the Mu'tazilite principles.

First verse: “And guard yourselves against the day when no soul will avail any other soul, and no intercession will be accepted from it, nor ransom will be taken from it, nor they will be helped” (*wattaqū yawman lā tajzī nafsun 'an nafsin shay'a wa lā yuqbalu minhā shafā'atun wa lā yu'khdhu minhā 'adlun wa lā hum yunṣarūn*).⁶²

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets this verse in accordance with the Mu'tazilites' principles and states that intercession (*shafā'a*) will not be accepted for those people who commit the major sins (*anna shafā'a lā tuqbal li-al-'usāt*). He states that “The day when no soul will avail any other soul” (*yawman lā tajzī nafsun 'an nafsin*) means that one soul will be not able to benefit the other soul. Also, in this verse the word “ransom” (*'adl*) means intercession (*shafā'a*) and therefore, he interprets “no ransom will be taken from it” (*lā yu'khdhu min-hā 'adl*) as “no intercession will be accepted from it” (*lā yuqbalu min-hā shafā'a*).⁶³

Second verse: “The sinners shall have none to help them” (*wa mā lil-ẓālimīna min anṣār*).⁶⁴

Al-Zamakhsharī states that there will be no helper (*nāṣir*) for the evil-doer in any form, that is, neither by intercession nor by others (*fa-lā nāṣira lahu bi-shafā'a wa-lā ḡayrahā*). For al-Zamakhsharī, since God denies any help (*nuṣra*) to the evil-doers, intercession (*shafā'a*) which is a form of help from God is also denied to them.⁶⁵

Third verse: “O believers, spend of what We have provided you before the day arrives when there will be neither commerce nor friendship nor intercession. The unbelievers are the wrong-doer” (*yā ayyuha al-ladhīna āmanū anfiqū mimmā razaqnākum min qabli an yā'tia yawmun lā bay'un fihī wa lā khullatun wa lā shafā'a wa al-kāfiruna hum al-ẓālimūn*).⁶⁶

⁶¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *Minhāj*, 39, 75.

⁶² Qur'ān, 2:48.

⁶³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:263–66.

⁶⁴ Qur'ān, 3:192.

⁶⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:678–79.

⁶⁶ Qur'ān, 2:254.

Al-Zamakhsharī states that there will be neither friends nor intercessors to intercede for the wrong-doers for the alleviation or mitigation of their punishment on the Day of Judgment. So far as the intercession is concerned, it is “enhancement of the grace, no more” (*ziyādat al-faḍl lā ghayr*). In other words, there will be no intercession for the unbelievers and there will be an increase in the grace for the believers.⁶⁷

Fourth verse: “The sinners will have neither friend nor intercessor whose (words) will be heeded” (*mā lil-ẓālimina min ḥamīimin wa lā shafī’in yuṭ’a*).⁶⁸

Al-Zamakhsharī says that the intercessors are “friends of God” (*awliyā’ Allāh*) and they only love and are pleased with those people whom God loves and is pleased with. God does not love the evil-doers. Therefore, they will neither help nor intercede for those who commit major sins. He adds that intercession increases grace and people endowed with increased grace become entitled to reward (*thawāb*) and he quotes verse 4:173 that “He will give more out of His favor” (*wa-yazīduhum min faḍlihi*).⁶⁹

Fifth verse: “The intercession of intercessors will be of no avail to them” (*famā tanfa’uhum shafā’atu al-shāfi’in*).⁷⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī states that even if all the intercessors from the angels, the prophets and others intercede for the person who commits the major sins it will not be accepted by God because they are loathsome (*maskhūṭ*). On that day, intercession will benefit those with whom God is pleased and He will elevate their ranks (*tazīd fī darajāt*).⁷¹

Sixth verse: “The day the Spirit and the angels shall stand in rows. They will not speak except whom the Compassionate has allowed and he will speak what is right” (*yawma yaqūmu al-rūḥu wa al-malā’ikatu ṣaffā lā yatakallamūna illā man adhina lahu al-raḥmānu wa qāla ṣawābā*).⁷²

Al-Zamakhsharī interprets that even if all the intercessors from the angels, from the prophets and others intercede for a person who has committed the major sins, they will not be accepted by God. On that day, intercession will be accepted only for those people with whom God is pleased and He will elevate their ranks. He also mentions that “the spirit” (*al-rūḥ*) and “the angels” (*al-malā’ika*) are “the best and noblest among the creation of God” (*afḍal al-khalā’iq wa-ashrafahum*) who are obedient and close to Him. However, they will not be

⁶⁷ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:477–80.

⁶⁸ Qur’ān, 40:18.

⁶⁹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:337–39.

⁷⁰ Qur’ān, 74:48.

⁷¹ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6:261–63.

⁷² Qur’ān, 78:38.

allowed to speak unless two conditions are fulfilled. First, that they have been permitted to speak for intercession and second, they will speak the truth. No intercession can take place without God's will.⁷³

Seventh verse: "And they do not intercede except for him whom He is well-pleased, and they stand in awe and reverence of Him" (*wa lā yashfa'ūna illā li-man irtaḍā wa hum min khashyatihī mushfiqūn*).⁷⁴

Al-Zamakhsharī says that the angels do not perform any act except what they are commanded and all of them carry out or stop back whatever is in progress and defer it with the assistance of God, and He has authority and grasp over them. The angels do not have the courage to intercede except for those with whom God is pleased and they deserve intercession and an increase in their reward. This will take place only with fear of God.⁷⁵

Al-Zamakhsharī's view is that intercession will be granted to the believers only with God's permission and the objective of intercession is to increase the grace and elevate the ranks of the believers. Intercession for those persons who commit the major sins will be rejected because they are the wrong-doers.

6 Conclusion

Al-Zamakhsharī, in conformity with the Mu'tazilites, believes that it is incumbent upon God to carry His "promise and threat" (*al-wa'd wa al-wa'id*) because He is just. God promises recompense to those who obey Him and threatens punishment to those who disobey Him.

Al-Zamakhsharī agrees with the Mu'tazilites' concept of "constraint" (*iljā'*) which is intended to solve the issue of the discrepancy between what God wills people to do and what they actually do. He also adheres to the concept of "the nullification and the atonement" (*al-iḥbāt wa al-takfīr*) that is related to obedience (*tā'a*) and disobedience (*ma'siya*). Nullification (*iḥbāt*) means that a person deserves to be rewarded if the act of obedience is greater than the act of disobedience, and the smaller disobedience will be removed, that is, nullified by the greater obedience. Atonement (*takfīr*) is the removal of a punishment from a person who deserves to be punished either by means of increasing his reward or due to his repentance. He also considers that "repentance" (*tawba*) is the only way to be forgiven by God for a person who commits major sins. If he

⁷³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6:302–3.

⁷⁴ Qur'ān, 21:28.

⁷⁵ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4:138–39.

dies unrepentant he will abide in the fire forever. Finally, he believes in intercession (*shafā'a*) but differs from the orthodox point of view, who believes that it will be for all the Muslims including those who commit the major sins.

Chapter 7 Fourth Principle: The Intermediate Position between Belief and Unbelief (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*)

The intermediate position between belief and unbelief (*al-manzila* ¹ *bayna al-manzilatayn*) literally means “the position between the two positions.” In fact, it is the first principle formulated by Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’ who defined the terminologies of “believer” (*mu’min*), “unbeliever” (*kāfir*), “hypocrite” (*munāfiq*) and “transgressor” (*fāsiq*) due to the controversy and contradictory definitions offered by different sects of Islam.

According to Wāṣil, a sinful Muslim cannot be called either a believer or an unbeliever, but belongs to a separate category of transgressor. He wanted a sinful Muslim to remain a member of the Muslim community, with all the rights that this involved (safety of life and property, inheritance from other Muslims, etc.), but he insisted that the sinner would be condemned to eternal punishment in Hell if that person did not repent. His position was not much different from the one taken by al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī, who called the Muslim sinner a “hypocrite” (*munāfiq*), while Wāṣil used the term “transgressor” (*fāsiq*) instead of hypocrite (*munāfiq*).

Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm did not accept the principle of “intermediate position” (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*), and he believed that the transgressor (*fāsiq*) remains a believer because of his belief and the good deeds performed by him.²

Abū Ma’n al-Numayrī Thumāma b. Ashras (d. 213/828) agreed with Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’. He considered that a transgressor (*fāsiq*) who dies unrepentant will remain in the Hell eternally; however, during his lifetime he was in the intermediate position between belief and unbelief (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*).³

Ibn al-Rāwandī criticized Wāṣil that by his doctrine of the intermediate position he deviated from the consensus of the community which had agreed that the Muslim sinner was either a believer, or an unbeliever or a hypocrite.⁴ Al-Khayyāṭ in his response stated that Wāṣil accepted the point on which the three groups, that is, al-Baṣrī, the Murji’ites and the Khārijites were agreed, namely that the Muslim sinner was a transgressor, and avoided the matters on which they differed. Wāṣil quotes from the Qur’ān that, “Fight those among

¹ The word *manzila* (pl. *manāzil*) means status, rank, degree or position.

² Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 269 – 70.

³ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:49.

⁴ Al-Khayyāṭ, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār*, 118.

the People of the Book who do not believe in God and the Last Day, who do not prohibit what God and His Messenger have forbidden, and do not profess the true religion from those who have been given the Book, till they pay the protective tax out of hand and in submission.”⁵ Wāṣil states that this ruling of God is for the People of the Book and they do not fall into the category of those who commit grave sins. He quotes another verse: “When you meet the unbelievers, strike their necks until you overpower them, and hold them in bondage. Then, either set them free graciously or for a ransom.”⁶ According to Wāṣil, it specifically refers to the Arab polytheists and all the unbelievers except the People of the Book, and they do not come under those who commit grave sins.⁷

So far as the hypocrite is concerned, if he conceals it, and it is not known, then apparently he is a Muslim; but if he discloses his unbelief and repents then he should be considered a Muslim, otherwise he is liable to be killed. In this situation, a grave sinner does not fall in this category. In case of a believer, God’s judgment is that He is his friend; He loves him and promises Paradise for him. Wāṣil substantiates it with the verses of the Qur’ān.⁸ Finally, for a grave sinner, there is a curse from God and He has prepared for him severe punishment in the hereafter.⁹

Al-Ash’arī does not agree with the Mu’tazilites’ principle regarding the principle of the intermediate position between belief and unbelief (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*). According to him, a believer becomes a transgressor (*fāsiq*), by committing a sin, but this does not change his status as a believer.¹⁰ He states that “regarding the belief in God, there is a consensus of those who speak Arabic the language in which the Qur’ān was revealed” (*al-taṣḍīq bi-Allāh wa-‘alā dhālika ijmā’ ahl al-luḡhat allatī nazala bihā al-Qur’ān*).¹¹ Al-Ash’arī further says that “before Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’, the chief of the Mu’tazila, men followed two opinions. The Khawārij among them regarded grave sinners as unbelievers, whereas the ‘People of Rectitude’ maintained the grave sinner was a believer by reason of his faith and a sinner by reason of his grave sin. But no one said that he was neither believer nor disbeliever before Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’” (*kāna al-nās qabl ḥudūth Wāṣil b. ‘Aṭā’ ra’īs al-mu’tazila ‘alā maqālatayn minhum khawārij yukaffirūna murtakabī al-kabā’ir wa- minhum ahl al-istiḳāma yaqūlūna huwa mu’min bi-*

5 Qur’ān, 9:29.

6 Qur’ān, 47:4.

7 Al-Khayyāt, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār*, 118–20.

8 Qur’ān, 2:57; 3:68; 9:72; 33:47; 66:8.

9 Qur’ān, 11:18; 82:14.

10 Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 154.

11 Al-Ash’arī, *al-Luma’*, 75.

īmānihi fāsiq bi-kabīratihi wa-lam yaqul minhum qā'il annahu laysa bi-mu'min wa-lā kāfir qabl ḥudūth Wāsil b. 'Aṭā).¹²

Al-Zamakhsharī agrees with the principle of ‘the intermediate position between belief and unbelief’ (*al-manzila bayna al- manzilatayn*), and believes that the major sins nullify the obedience (acts of worship). Whosoever dies persisting in the major sins will be in the Hellfire forever. In this world, such a person will be in ‘the intermediate position between belief and unbelief’ (*al-manzila bayna al- manzilatayn*). He can neither be called ‘believer’ (*mu'min*) and ‘Muslim’ (*muslim*), nor ‘unbeliever’ (*kāfir*), ‘polytheist’ (*mushrik*) and ‘hypocrite’ (*munāfiq*); rather he can be called ‘transgressor’ (*fāsiq*).¹³ In his interpretation, most of the time he quotes other verses from the Qur'ān to emphasize his point of view.

1 The Concept of Belief (*īmān*)

Majority of the Mu'tazilites differ in their definition of belief (*īmān*). Some of them say that belief consists of all the acts of obedience: “obligatory” (*farḍ*) as well as “supererogatory” (*naḥl*), while others are of the viewpoint that belief is to avoid that for which there is threat of punishment (*wa'id*) from God. Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī considers that belief in God is all that He has made obligatory upon His servants, and supererogatory acts are not part of the belief.¹⁴

Jahm b. Ṣafwān was probably the first person who defined the concept of belief (*īmān*). According to him, “Belief is the knowledge of God and His prophets and all that has come down from God only” (*al-īmān huwa al-ma'rifa bi-Allāh wa bi-rusulihi wa bi-jamī' mā jā'a min 'indi Allāh faqaṭ*). In addition, there should be affirmation by tongue, obedience in heart, and love and glorification for both God and His Prophet Muḥammad.¹⁵ He further states that “Unbelief is nothing but ignorance and there is no unbeliever except one who is ignorant of God” (*lā kufr illā al-jahl wa lā kāfir illā jāhil bi Allāh*).¹⁶

Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm states that “the belief is an aggregation of all the acts of worship” (*al-īmān jamī'u al-ṭā'āt*). If someone commits a major sin he is neither an unbeliever (*kāfir*) nor a hypocrite (*munāfiq*), but a transgressor (*fāsiq*) and re-

¹² Al-Ash'arī, *al-Luma'*, 76; Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 154, 194.

¹³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *Minhāj*, 36, 73.

¹⁴ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 266–9.

¹⁵ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 132, 279.

¹⁶ Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 477.

mains a believer due to his belief in the unity of God and performance of good deeds.¹⁷ Bishr b. Ghiyāth al-Marīsī defines faith (*īmān*) as the attestation (*taṣdīq*) of what is belief (*īmān*) and what is not attestable is not belief (*wa-mā laysa bi-taṣdīq fa-laysa īmān*), and the attestation by the heart and the tongue, together.¹⁸

According to Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al-Najjār, belief (*īmān*) consists in the knowledge of God, of His apostles and His commandments and in the profession of this knowledge by the mouth. It consists of several qualities (*khiṣāl*), each of which is an act of obedience (*ṭāʿa*); complete belief is the sum of all the *ṭāʿāt*. Belief may increase but does not decrease (*inna al-īmān yazīd wa-lā yanquṣ*), however, it can be completely lost only through unbelief.¹⁹ Al-Najjār's concept of belief is closer to the Sunnī one but it is not the same as that of the Murjī'a. Al-Nazzām considers that belief is to avoid grave sins, and the grave sins are those for which punishment has been prescribed by God.²⁰ Hishām al-Fuwāṭi defines belief (*īmān*) as an aggregation of all the worships, that is prescribed (*farḍ*) and supererogatory (*nafl*). The belief is of two kinds: "belief in God" (*īmān bi'llāh*), admission of faith by heart, and "belief for God's sake" (*īmān li'llāh*), works of faith by which God's will is accomplished.²¹

According to 'Abbād b. Sulaymān al-Ṣumayrī, belief (*īmān*) is aggregation of all of the commandments of God, such as obligatory duties and supererogatory actions. Belief is of two types: belief in God (*īmān bi-Allāh*), and belief for God (*īmān li-Allāh*). Belief in God is one when a person relinquishes everything which is considered unbelief. The belief for God is when a person abandons error *dalāl*, sin (*fisq*) – even the minor ones, and all the acts of ignorance of God (*kull af'āl al-jāhil*).²²

Abū Ḥanīfa²³ says that, "Belief is the knowledge and the acknowledgement of God (*al-ma'rifa bi-Allāh wa al-iqrār bi-Allāh*) and the knowledge and the ac-

17 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 270; J. van Ess, "al-Aṣamm, Abū Bakr 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. Kaysān," *ET² Supplement*, 12:88–90.

18 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 140.

19 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 135–36.

20 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 268–69.

21 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 268.

22 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 268.

23 Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān b. Thābit, theologian, renowned Kufan jurist and the eponym of the Ḥanafite school was born in 80/699 in Kufa. He is called by his followers as *Imām al-a'ẓam* (the greatest imām) and *Sirāj al-a'imma* (lamp of the imāms). He lived in Kufa and earned his livelihood as a manufacturer and merchant of *khazz*, a silk fabric. In theology, he was influenced by 'Amir al-Sha'bī (d. ca. 104/722), a Kufan traditionist and jurist. In addition to al-Sha'bī, he studied with Nāfi' (d. ca. 117/735), a *mawla* of Ibn 'Umar; 'Aṭa b. Abī Rabāḥ (d. ca. 114/732), a leading Meccan jurist; and Rabi'a b. Abī al-Raḥmān (d. ca. 136/753), a Medinese authority. In ju-

risprudence, he attended the circle of the Kufan jurist Ḥammād b. Abī Sulaymān (d. 120/737) who taught *fiqh*. After Ḥammād's death, Abū Ḥanīfa became the leader of the circle and the foremost authority on law in Kufa and the main representative of the Kufan school of law. For the doctrines that he received from Ḥammād, the main sources are the *Āthār* of Abu Yūsuf and the *Āthār* of al-Shaybānī. Abū Ḥanīfa did not himself compose any works on religious law but discussed his opinions with and dictated them to his disciples. Several theological treatises are attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa: *Risāla ilā 'Uthmān al-Battī*, *al-Fiqh al-akbar*, *Kitāb al-'Ālim wa al-muta'allim*, and *Waṣīyyat Abī Ḥanīfa*. Of these, only *Risāla* is regarded as authentic. In theology, Abū Ḥanīfa's disciples included Abū Muṭī' al-Ḥakam b. 'Abd Allāh b. Maslama al-Balkhī (d. 199/814), and Abū Muqātil Ḥafṣ b. Salm al-Samarqandī (d. 208/823), who introduced Abū Ḥanīfa's teachings to their homeland of Khurāsān, where Ḥanafism became predominant. In jurisprudence, his disciples included Zufar b. al-Hudhayl b. Qays al-'Anbarī (d. 158/775), Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb b. Ibrāhīm al-Anṣārī al-Kufī (d. 182/798), and Abū 'Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī (d. 189/805). Towards the end of the Umayyad period, Abū Ḥanīfa was flogged after refusing to accept the position of *qāḍī* of Kufa offered by Yūsuf b. 'Umar b. Hubayra, governor of Iraq (129–32/746–49). In 130/747, he left for Mecca and stayed there. During the 'Abbāsid rule, the second caliph al-Manṣūr (r. 136–58/754–75) summoned Abū Ḥanīfa to Baghdad to appoint him a *qāḍī*, which he refused and was imprisoned. It is not clear whether he died in prison or after his release in the year 150/767. Al-Ḥasan b. 'Umāra al-Bajali offered his funeral prayers and he was buried in the Khayzurān cemetery in Baghdad. According to another report caliph Manṣūr offered the funeral prayers. Abū Ḥanīfa has been both praised and criticized very strongly. In hagiographies composed by the Ḥanafites such as Abū 'Abd Allāh al-Ṣaymarī (d. 436/1045), al-Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Makki (d. 568/1172), and Ḥāfiẓ al-Dīn b. Muḥammad al-Kardārī (d. 827/1424), he is portrayed as a man of utmost piety and virtues. He was criticized as the leader of the *ahl al-rā'y* and a weak transmitter of *ḥadīths*. He was accused as being Murjī'ite, and holding the doctrine of the created Qur'ān. His theology and jurisprudence have been attacked. He was denounced as a secret unbeliever (*zindīq*), and was accused of infidelity (*kufī*). See Muḥammad Ibn S'ad, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-kabīr*, ed. 'Alī Muḥammad 'Umar (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 2001), 8:489; Ibn al-Nadīm, *al-Fihrist*, 342–43; al-Sam'ānī, *al-Ansāb*, 3:40–41; Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yūsuf al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-kamāl fī asmā' al-rijāl*, ed. Bash-shār 'Awwād Ma'rūf (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla, 1992), 29:417–45; Ibn Athīr, *Kāmil fī al-Tārīkh*, 5:594; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5: 405–15; al-Dhahabī, *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffāz*, 1:168–69; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 6: 390–403; Ibn al-Murtaḍā, *al-Munya*, 47–48; Ibn Abī al-Wafā, *al-Jawāhir al-muḍī'yya*, 1:49–63; Muwaffaq b. Aḥmad al-Makki and Ḥāfiẓ al-Dīn b. Muḥammad al-Kurdi, *Manāqib Abī Ḥanīfa* (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī, 1981); Abū Muqātil Ḥafṣ b. Salm al-Samarqandī, *al-'Ālim wa al-muta'allim li-Abī Ḥanīfa*, ed. Muḥammad Rawwās Qalā'jī and 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Hindī al-Nadawī (Ḥalab: Maṭba'at al-Balāgha, 1972), 55–56; Mu'allif al-majhūl, *Kitāb al-'Uyūn wa al-ḥadā'iq fī akhbār al-ḥaqā'iq*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthannā, 1964; reprint of Leiden edition, 1869–71), 260–61; Wensinck, *Muslim Creed*, 102–87; J. Schacht, "Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān," *EI*², 1:123–24; Hiroyuki Yanagihashi, "Abū Ḥanīfa," *EI*³, 2 (2007):43–51; Ahmad Pakatchi and Suheyl Umar, "Abū Ḥanīfa," *EI*³, 1:818–41.

knowledge of the messenger of God and of what has arrived from God in its entirety, without explanation (*al-ma'rifa bi-al-rasūl wa al-iqrār bi-mā jā'a min 'indi Allāh bi-al-jumla dūna al-tafsīr*).²⁴

Al-Ash'arī mentions that “He (Abū Ḥanīfa) considered that belief is not divisible and it neither increases nor decreases and that people do not excel one another in belief (*za'ama innā al-īmān lā yataba'aḍ wa lā yazīd wa lā yanquṣ wa la yatafāḍal al-nās fihi*).²⁵

In the letter to 'Uthmān al-Battī (d. 143/760), Abū Ḥanīfa argues explicitly against the Mu'tazilite principle of “the intermediate position between belief and unbelief” (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*), and distinguishes the “transgressor” (*fāsiq*) from both the “believer” (*mu'min*) and the “unbeliever” (*kāfir*). According to him, the “name belief and its sacrosanctity” (*ism al-īmān wa ḥurmatuhu*) cannot be taken away from a “believer” (*mu'min*) who commits a sin because it is connected with this name. For Abū Ḥanīfa, “belief” (*īmān*) means “knowledge” (*ma'rifa*), “acknowledgement” (*iqrār*), and “assent” (*taṣḍīq*).²⁶

Abū Muqātil Ḥafṣ b. Salm al-Samarqandī (d. 208/823), one of Abū Ḥanīfa's disciples, does not distinguish between various terminologies such as “assent” (*taṣḍīq*), “knowledge” (*ma'rifa*), “conviction” (*yaqīn*), “acknowledgement” (*iqrār*), and “submission” (*islām*) used for “belief” (*īmān*) and considers them as synonymous: “These are different names, which have one and the same meaning” (*inna ḥādhihi asmā' mukhtalifa wa ma'nāhā wāḥid*).²⁷

Al-Ash'arī defines faith as affirmation (*taṣḍīq*) of God's oneness, and it is based upon the consensus of the community. According to him, “To believe is to assent in the mind; it is the believer's belief in the truthfulness of the one in whom he believes” (*al-īmān huwa al-taṣḍīq bi-al-qalbī wa huwa i'tiqād al-mu'taqid ṣidqa man yu'minu bihi*).²⁸ Abū Manṣūr 'Abd al-Qāhir b. Tāhir b. Muḥammad al-Baghdādī (d. 429/1037) mentions that “Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī stated that belief is an assent to God and His messengers (peace be upon them) in their statements and this assent is valid only through knowledge; disbelief in his opinion is denial” (*fa qāla abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī innā al-īmān huwa taṣḍīq li-Allāh wa li-rusulihi 'alayhum al-salām fī akhbārihim wa la yakūna*

24 Cornelia Schöck, “Belief and Unbelief in Classical Sunni Theology,” *EP*, 2 (2010):101–11.

25 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 139.

26 Abū Ḥanīfa Nu'mān b. Thābit, *Risāla ilā 'Uthmān al-Battī*, in Al-'Ālim wa al-muta'allim, ed. Muḥammad Zāhid b. al-Ḥasan al-Kawtharī (Cairo: Maṭba'at al-Anwār, 1939), 34–8.

27 Al-Samarqandī, *al-'Ālim wa al-muta'allim*, 55–56; Cornelia Schöck, “Belief and Unbelief in Classical Sunni Theology,” *EP*, 2 (2010):101–11.

28 Al-Ash'arī, *al-Luma'*, 75–76; Ibn Fūrak, *Mujarrad*, 150.

hadhā al-taṣdīq ṣaḥīḥan illā bi-maʿrifatihi wa al-kufr ʿindahū huwa al-takdhīb).²⁹ For al-Ashʿarī, one who disbelieves is a disbeliever (*kāfir*), and one who commits a sin is a transgressor (*fāsiq*), ... and similarly, one who has faith (*īmān*) is a believer (*muʾmin*).³⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī's definition of belief is reflected in his interpretation of the following seven verses.

First verse: "Those who believe in the Unknown and perform prayers, and spend out of what We have provided them" (*al-ladhīna yuʾminūna bi al-ghaybi wa yuqīmūn al-ṣalāt wa mim mā razaqnā hum yunfiqūn*).³¹

Al-Zamakhsharī says that, "belief" (*īmān*) consists of performing "righteous deeds" (*fī l al-ḥasanāt*), avoiding "bad deeds" (*tarak al-sayyiʿāt*), especially believing in the unknown (*takhṣiṣhā lil-īmān bi-al-ghayb*), performing the prayers (*iqām al-ṣalāt*) and giving the charity (*itāʾ al-zakāt*).³²

Second verse: The Bedouins say: "We believe." Say: "You do not believe, but say: 'We submit;' for belief has not yet entered your hearts" (*qālati al-aʿrābu āmannā qul lam tuʾminū wa lākin qulū aslamnā wa lammā yadkhuli al-īmānu fī qulūbikum*).³³

He says that, "the belief is confirmation with certainty and peace of mind" (*al-īmān huwa al-taṣdīq maʿ al-thiqa wa ṭamāniya al-nafs*). An affirmation with the tongue without an agreement of heart is called "submission" (*islām*), while an affirmation with the tongue with an agreement of heart is called "belief" (*īmān*).³⁴

Third verse: "The true believers are those who believe in God and His Messenger, then are free of doubt, and strive with their wealth and souls in the cause of God. They are the truthful ones" (*innama al-muʾminūn al-ladhīna āmanū bi-Allāh wa rasūlihi thumma lam yartābū wa jāhadū bi-amwālihim wa anfusihim fī sabīl Allāh ulāʾika hum al-ṣādiqūn*).³⁵

In his interpretation of this verse al-Zamakhsharī elaborates that there should be no doubt in one's heart when one believes. The true characteristic of belief is that it should be free of any suspicion and have perfect peace of

²⁹ Abū Maṣṣūr al-Baghdādī, *Uṣūl al-dīn*, 248.

³⁰ Al-Ashʿarī, *al-Lumaʿ*, 75.

³¹ Qurʾān, 2:3.

³² Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:150–5.

³³ Qurʾān, 49:14.

³⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:587–8.

³⁵ Qurʾān, 49:15.

mind with serenity. Such persons who are firm and steadfast in their belief are true believers.³⁶

Fourth verse: "Surely those who believe and do the good will be guided by their Lord for their belief" (*inna al-ladhīna āmanū wa ‘amilū al-ṣāliḥāt yahdīhim rabbuhum bi-īmānihim*).³⁷

According to al-Zamakhsharī, a person whose belief is associated with good deeds, becomes worthy of guidance, success and light on the Day of Resurrection, and it is a "tied belief" (*īmān muqayyad*). And for a person whose belief is not combined with good deeds, there is no success and no light. Therefore, those people who have combined their belief and righteous deeds, "their belief is joined with pious performance and this is a clear and manifest belief in which there is no doubt" (*bi-īmānihim hādḥā al-maḍmūm ilayhi al-‘aml al-ṣāliḥ wa huwa bayyīn wāḍiḥ lā shubḥa fiḥī*).³⁸

Fifth verse: "The day when some of your Lord's signs come, the embracing of faith will not avail any soul which already did not accept it, or who did not perform good deeds by virtue of his faith" (*yawm yā'ti ba'd āyāt rabbika lā yanfa'u nafsān imānuhā lam takun āmanat min qabl aw kasabat fī imānihā khayr*).³⁹

He states that one should believe in God before the appearance of His signs which will take place prior to the Day of Judgment. If he does not believe before it, his belief will be of no avail. Similarly, if a person believes at a time when he cannot perform good deeds it will be of no benefit for him because the one who believes and performs righteous deeds will achieve success and blessings from God otherwise sufferings and destruction. He also states that belief and good deeds are combined together.⁴⁰

Sixth verse: "And give happy tidings to the believers who do deeds of righteousness that for them is a great reward" (*wa yubashshiru al-mu'minīna al-ladhīna ya'malūna al-ṣṣāliḥāti anna lahum ajran kabīra*).⁴¹

Al-Zamakhsharī states that if you ask: "How the righteous believers and unbelievers are mentioned, whereas the sinful are not referred to?" He responds that at the time when the principle of the intermediate position between belief and unbelief (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*) was formulated, people were divided into either pious believers or polytheists. It was after this principle that the

³⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:588–9.

³⁷ Qur'ān, 10:9.

³⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:116–17.

³⁹ Qur'ān, 6:158.

⁴⁰ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:415–16.

⁴¹ Qur'ān, 17: 9.

Mu'tazilites placed the "sinful people" in the intermediate position between belief and unbelief (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*).⁴²

Seventh verse: "It is not in accordance with your desires, nor the desires of the people of the Book. Whosoever does evil will be recompensed for it, and will find no protector or friend apart from God" (*laysa bi-amāniyyikum wa lā amāniyyī ahl al-kitāb man ya'mal su'an yajza bihi wa lā yajid lahu min dūn Allāh wa-līyyan wa lā naṣīrā*).⁴³

He says that this verse is addressed to the Muslims and belief cannot be achieved by desire only. It has to be established in the heart and attested/confirmed by deeds. People of the Book are also mentioned in this verse, who desire to be forgiven despite having no good deeds. But God frustrates their desires and unequivocally states that belief is integrated with righteous deeds. Whosoever performs good deeds he will be successful and whosoever performs bad deeds he will be destroyed.⁴⁴

According to al-Zamakhsharī, belief consists of three elements: confession by heart (*taṣdīq bi-al-qalb*), affirmation by tongue (*iqrār bi-al-lisān*) and confirmation by deeds (*taṣdīq bi-al-'amal*).

2 The Major and the Minor Sins (*al-kabā'ir wa-al-saghā'ir*)

The Mu'tazilites differ with regard to the definition of major and minor sins.⁴⁵ According to Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī sins fall into two categories: minor and major. The minor sins deserve to be forgiven if the major sins are avoided. This assertion is based upon the following verses of the Qur'ān: "If you keep away from the grave sins you have been forbidden, We shall efface your evil deeds and lead you to a place of honor," and "Those who avoid grave sins and indecent deeds, except

⁴² Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:496–97.

⁴³ Qur'ān, 4:123.

⁴⁴ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2:151–52.

⁴⁵ Many commentators consider term like *dhanb*, *ithm* and *ma'ṣiya*, a common gloss for *ithm*. The terms like *dhanb*, *ithm* and *masia* refer to major sins while *lamam*, *sayyia* and *khatia* refer to minor sins. *Kabā'ir* are sins that have been expressly forbidden in the Qur'ān and the sunna; acts that entail the ḥadd penalties. According to a *ḥadiīth* reported by Abū Hurayra, there are seven major sins: associating anyone with God, sorcery, unlawful homicide, usurping the property of the orphans, usury, fleeing from the battlefield and slandering believing women. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb al-waṣāya*, no. 23; *Kitāb al-ḥudūd*, no. 44; Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, *Kitāb al-imān*, no. 145; Abū Dā'ūd, *Sunan*, *Kitāb al-waṣāya*, no. 2874. See Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Sin, Major and Minor," *EQ*, 5:19.

minor offences, verily your Lord is ample in forgiveness.”⁴⁶ The avoidance of the major sins nullifies the punishment of the minor sins.

Some of the Mu‘tazilites are of the opinion that major sins are those for which there is God’s threat (*wa’id*) and others are the minor sins. According to Ja‘far b. Mubashshir, “all the intended major sins and all the intentionally committed disobediences are major” (*kulli ‘amd kabīr wa-kulli murtakib li-ma‘ṣiyati muta‘ammidan lahā fa-huwa murtakib li-kabīr*).⁴⁷ Also, if a person commits a sin intentionally, he is considered a transgressor (*fāsiq*).⁴⁸ Bishr b. al-Mu‘tamar is of the opinion that whoever repents of a grave sin and commits it again deserves punishment for the first sin also because his repentance was accepted on condition that he would not sin again.⁴⁹ Bishr al-Marīsī considers all acts of disobedience to God as grave sins (*kabā’ir*), and the sins are of two types: major and minor sins.⁵⁰ According to Abū Mūsā al-Murdār, the sins of human beings occur by the will of God, but only insofar as He has given them free choice in the matter of committing transgression and it is not incompatible with the divine prohibition of committing sin.⁵¹

The Mu‘tazilites also differ regarding the forgiveness of the minor sins, and there are three opinions in this matter. Some say that God forgives by His “favor” (*tafaḍḍul*) the minor sins if one avoids the major sins. Others say that God forgives the minor sins if one avoids the major sins with certitude and conviction (*istihqāq*). Finally, some say that God does not forgive the minor sins without repentance.⁵²

Al-Zamakhsharī says that “sins” consist of both major (*kabā’ir*) and minor (*ṣaghā’ir*) sins. Major sins are those offences that deserve punishment and it is not abolished until the repentance is made. Indecent and vile offences (*fawāḥish*) and associating others with God are also major sins. The minor sins are venial offences (*al-lamam*) and petty in their nature, such as “pollution or dirt” (*al-lawtha*).⁵³

Al-Zamakhsharī is also of the opinion that the prophets are infallible of committing the major sins. However, when Adam was sent down on the earth, it was a lapse on his part for forgetting what God had commanded him: not to listen to

⁴⁶ Qur’ān, 4:31; 53:32.

⁴⁷ Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 271.

⁴⁸ Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 273.

⁴⁹ Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:45.

⁵⁰ Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 143.

⁵¹ Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 190, 228, 512.

⁵² Al-Ash‘arī, *Maqālāt*, 271.

⁵³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:645.

the Satan. But when he repented, he was forgiven by God. Al-Zamakhsharī says that despite the fact that it was only a minor offence, but since he was a prophet, his minor lapse was considered a big offence and repentance was necessary for him.⁵⁴

Al-Zamakhsharī, in accordance with the Mu'tazilite views, does not differentiate between an unbeliever and a person who commits major sins and does not repent, because he will not be forgiven without repentance.

3 Conclusion

Al-Zamakhsharī follows the principle of *al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*, literally meaning “the position between the two positions” or commonly referred to as “the intermediate position between belief and unbelief.” His definitions of the “believer” (*mu'min*), “non-believer” (*kāfir*) and “transgressor (*fāsiq*)” are synonymous to those of the Mu'tazilites.

According to al-Zamakhsharī, “belief” (*īmān*) consists of performing “righteous deeds” (*fi'l al-ḥasanāt*) and avoiding “bad deeds” (*tarak al-sayyi'āt*). He elaborates that belief consists of three elements: confirmation by heart (*taṣdīq bi-al-qalb*), affirmation by tongue (*iqrār bi-al-lisān*) and confirmation by deeds (*taṣdīq bi-al-'amal*). He states that “sins” (*āthām*, sing. *ithm*) consist of two types: major (*kabā'ir*) and minor (*ṣaghā'ir*). Major sins are those offences that deserve punishment and it is not abolished until the repentance is made. Indecent and vile offences (*fawāḥish*) and associating others with God are also major sins. The minor sins are venial offences (*al-lamam*) and petty in their nature, such as “pollution or dirt” (*al-lawṭha*).

54 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:255–57.

Chapter 8 Fifth Principle: Enjoining what is Right and Forbidding what is Wrong (*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*)

The fifth principle of the Mu'tazilites is *al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar* "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong."¹ They justify this principle on the basis of the Qur'ān, the tradition of the Prophet and the consensus of the community (*ijmā'*).² They argue that it is in accordance with the Qur'ān: "Let there be among you a community inviting to goodness, enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong."³ They also quote the tradition of the Prophet which states that: "When people see forbidden action and do not change it swiftly, God will render them blind with His punishment."⁴ So far as the consensus of the community is concerned they say that all the Mu'tazilites agree on this issue.

The details and specifics of this principle in the early period of Mu'tazilites are scanty. Ibn al-Nadīm mentions that Abū Bakr al-Aṣamm, and Ja'far b. Mu-bashshir (d. 234/848) both wrote *Kitāb al-Amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*. Hishām al-Fuwaṭī (d. ca. 230/844) wrote *Kitāb Usūl al-khams*.⁵ Most probably, Hishām al-Fuwaṭī might have mentioned this principle in his book because the title suggests five principles. According to al-Ash'arī, all the Mu'tazilites, except al-Aṣamm considered "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*) as obligatory "pro-

1 Michael Cook's translation of the terms is as follows: "[C]ommanding' (*amr*) is telling someone below one in rank (*rutba*) to do something, while forbidding (*nahy*) is telling them not to; 'right' (*ma'rūf*) is any action of which the agent knows or infers the goodness (*ḥusn*), and 'wrong' (*munkar*) any action of which he knows or infers the badness (*qubḥ*)." See Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong*, 195–226; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 141.

2 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 142.

3 It is mentioned eight times in the Qur'ān, 3: 104, 110, 114; 7: 157; 9: 71, 112; 22: 41 and 31: 17.

4 I could not find the *ḥadīth* cited by 'Abd al-Jabbār in any collections of *aḥādīth*. However, I found another *ḥadīth* in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, which conveys more or less the same meaning. The *ḥadīth* quoted by 'Abd al-Jabbār is: "No eye that witnesses God being disobeyed should twinkle before changing or leaving the scene" (*laysa li-'ayn tara Allāhu yu'ṣa fa-taṭrif ḥattā taḥyiyir aw tantaqil*). Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal. *Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1969), 1: 2; 'Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 142.

5 J.W. Fück, "Some Hitherto Unpublished Texts on the Mu'tazilite Movement from Ibn al-Nadīm's *al-Fihrist*," in Fuat Sezgin's *Islamic Philosophy: The Teachings of the Mu'tazila* (Frankfurt: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science at the Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, 2000), 212, 208, 213.

vided they are able to perform it with the tongue, hand, and sword, in whatever manner they are able to do it” (*ma’a al-imbān wa al-qudra bi al-lisān wa al-yad wa al-sayf kayfa qadarū ‘alā dhālika*).⁶

Al-Khayyāt defines a Mu’tazilite who adheres to “the five principles” (*uṣūl al-khamsa*), and ranks “enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong” (*al-amr bi al-ma’rūf wa al-nahy ‘an al-munkar*) in its classical fifth place.⁷ Similarly, Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. al-Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī al-Mas’ūdī (d. 346/956) mentions that whoever believes in the “five principles” is a Mu’tazilite, and if someone believes in more or less than these five principles then he cannot be called a Mu’tazilite. Regarding the fifth principle “enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong” (*al-amr bi al-ma’rūf wa al-nahy ‘an al-munkar*), he states that “it is obligatory upon all the believers to perform this duty according to their capability” (*‘alā sār al-mu’minīn wājib ‘alā ḥasbi istiṭā’athum fī dhālika*). He further states that it is like *jihād* in which “there is no distinction between fighting the unbeliever and the transgressor” (*lā farq bayna mujāhadat al-kāfir wa al-fāsiq*).⁸

There is a difference of opinion between Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī whether the obligatory nature of “enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong” could be known through reason or revelation. Abū ‘Alī’s view is that it is known through reason, whereas Abū Hāshim considers that it is through both reason revelation except in one situation that a person observes someone doing wrong then it is obligatory through reason to stop that wrong. Abū Hāshim also states that good (*ma’rūf*) is of two types: one is obligatory (*wājib*) and the other is supererogatory (*nāfil*). The obligatory good is essential while the supererogatory goodness is not imperative but it is over and above the obligatory goodness. On the other hand, wrong (*munkar*) is only of one type and there is no such classification as minor wrong or major wrong.⁹

According to ‘Abd al-Jabbār, the unity of the Muslim community is of paramount importance and it is recommended that if there is division among people, efforts should be made for reconciliation between them not only through negotiations but with force also. He quotes the following verses of the Qur’ān: “If two groups of the believers fight one another, promote peace between them; but if one of them rebels against the other then fight against the rebellious group until it complies with God’s command. If it does so, make peace among them with justice and equitably.”¹⁰

6 Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 278.

7 Al-Khayyāt, *Kitāb al-Intiṣār*, 93.

8 Al-Mas’ūdī, *Murūj al-dhahab*, 3: 221–23.

9 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 142, 146, 742.

10 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣūl al-khamsa*, 144, 741; Qur’ān, 49: 9.

‘Abd al-Jabbār follows Abū ‘Alī al-Jubbā’ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā’ī that good (*ma’rūf*) may be either obligatory or supererogatory depending upon whether the good to be commanded is by nature obligatory or supererogatory. However, forbidding wrong is always obligatory because a wrong (*munkar*) is repugnant (*qabīḥ*). Regarding whether the obligation to command good and forbid wrong is known by reason or revelation, his view is that it is known only from revelation.

According to ‘Abd al-Jabbār, there are five conditions for commanding the right and forbidding the wrong. First, one should know what matters are right and what are wrong. If one cannot distinguish between the two, one will make error in one’s judgment. Second, he should know that “the wrong is going to happen” (*al-munkar ḥāḍir*); for instance, existence of necessary means for drinking alcohol, or musical and amusement instruments. Third, one should be aware that taking an action will not lead to a “greater harm” (*muḍarrat a’ẓam*). If he knows or feels that prohibiting the alcohol drinkers may result in the bloodshed of Muslims, or burning of a neighborhood, then there is no obligation to perform this act. Fourth, one knows or believes that his advice would have an “effect” (*ta’tīr*). Fifth, if he knows or feels that one’s action will not result in harm to one’s personal safety or property.¹¹

‘Abd al-Jabbār states that since the objective of the fifth principle is to command what is right and forbid what is wrong one should not resort to difficult and unpleasant measures where the same can be accomplished by easy and convenient methods. This is known by both reason and revelation. So far as the reason is concerned, if a task can be performed easily, it is not prudent to pursue a difficult course. As far as revelation is concerned, God first commands to mediate through discourse between the two fighting groups of the believers. If they do not desist in fighting, the group at fault should be subdued by force and fighting.¹² He further states that if one is not persuaded by verbal warning then he should be prevented by force. He gives the example of a wine drinker. First, he should be forbidden gently (*bi al-qawl al-layyin*); if he continues then he should be spoken to harshly (*khashshana lahu al-qawl*); if he persists then he should be beaten; and finally, if he does not stop then he should be fought.¹³

The Mu’tazilites argue that a rational person knows that it is in his or her interest to acquire benefit and welfare and avoid harm. If there is oppression and harm being inflicted upon the people, then it is necessary to stop it. Religion

11 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 142–43.

12 Qur’ān, 49: 9; ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 144.

13 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 744–45.

also promotes peace and equity among the people and discourages injustice and violation of their rights. So, enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong is justifiable from the rational and religious point of view.

There are two viewpoints for the implementation of this principle. According to the first opinion only rulers (*a'imma*) are responsible and preferable for executing the prescribed punishments (*ḥudūd*), safeguarding the territory, protecting the seaports, maintaining the army and appointing the judges and executives. People at large (*kāffat al-nās*) can take action against wine-drinking, theft, adultery, and the like. However, if there is a legitimate ruler, then it is better that he should carry out these duties.¹⁴

According to the second opinion, it is a collective duty (*farḍ kifāya*), the fulfillment of which by some individuals exempts the other individuals from fulfilling it. In this case, if a sufficient number of people assume the responsibility to implement this principle so that the people may follow the right path and resist impiety, it will excuse other members of the society to perform this duty.¹⁵ Whether this principle is implemented through a ruler or by some individuals, the main purpose is that there should be a mechanism which ensures that the people are being commanded to perform good deeds and forbidden from the evil acts.

Al-Zamakhsharī considers it a “collective duty” (*farḍ ‘alā al-kifāya*) the fulfillment of which by some persons exempts the others in the society.¹⁶ His interpretation of the verses pertaining to “enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong” (*al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahay ‘an al-munkar*) is as follows:

First verse: “And let there be a community among you who may call to goodness and enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong. They are those who will be successful” (*waltakun minkum ‘ummatu yad’ūna ila al-khayri wa ya’murūna bi al-ma’rūfi wa yanhawna ‘an al-munkar wa ‘ulā’ika hum al-mufliḥūn*).¹⁷

According to al-Zamakhsharī, it is a “collective duty,” and it can be done only by a person who can distinguish between right and wrong and knows

14 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 148, 750.

15 ‘Abd al-Jabbār, *Sharḥ al-uṣul al-khamsa*, 148.

16 The verse states that there should be a “community among you” (*minkum ummatun*). The issue is the meaning of “of” (*min*). Does it mean “consisting of,” or “from among”? In the technical language of the exegetes the first will be an instance of “specification” (*tabyīn*) implying that all members of the community have the duty of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong. The second will be an instance of “some/partition” (*tab’īḍ*) implying that only some members are obligated. Al-Zamakhsharī in his interpretation of this verse, uses “some/partition” (*tab’īḍ*). See Michael Cook, “Virtues and Vices, Commanding and Forbidding,” *EQ*, 5:436.

17 Qur’ān, 3: 104.

how to perform and pursue this duty. There is a possibility that an ignorant person may forbid the right and enjoin the wrong. He may become harsh in a situation where he is supposed to be lenient or may become gentle at an occasion when he is expected to be tough. If he does not know the juristic differences between the various legal schools (*madhāhib*),¹⁸ it is possible that he may forbid a person from those things which are permissible in his school. Also, if he forbids an obstinate person from doing something, that person may become more strict and persistent in his wrong-doing.

Al-Zamakhsharī also says that there are some conditions which must be taken into consideration while performing this duty. First, a person who is forbidding must be certain that it is a wrong thing. Second, the prohibited thing from which he is forbidding a person has not yet occurred, because if it has already taken place then it is in vain (*‘abath*) to stop. Third, he should be certain that his forbidding will not have negative consequences, i.e. he may commit more sins as a reaction. Fourth, he should be certain that from his forbidding that person will refrain from committing bad deeds. He emphasizes that one must be certain that the person is very close to committing a sin and that he will not be assaulted and hurt from the person whom he is forbidding.¹⁹

Second verse: “You are the best nation brought forth to mankind, enjoining the good, forbidding the wrong and believing in God” (*kuntum khaya ‘ummatin ‘ukhrijat lil-nāsi tā‘murūna bi al-ma‘rūfī wa tanhawna ‘an al-munkar wa tu‘minūna bi-Allāh*).²⁰

Al-Zamakhsharī states that in this verse God has compared this nation with the previous nations mentioned and found it to be the best among all the nations. God says that, “You were raised for commanding what is right and forbidding what is wrong.”²¹

Third verse: “They believe in God and the Last Day, and enjoin the good and forbid the wrong and hasten to do good things. They are among the righteous people” (*yu‘minūna bi-Allāhi wa al-yawmi al-ākhirī wa yā‘murūna bi al-ma‘rūfī wa yanhawna ‘an al-munkarī wa yusārī‘ūna fī al-khayrat wa ‘ulā‘ika min al-ṣāliḥīn*).²²

18 *Madhhab* (pl. *madhāhib*) as a term of religion means “a doctrine, a tenet, or an opinion with regard to a particular case” and in law specifically, a technical term mostly translated as “school of law.” There are four legal schools recognized as orthodox by the Sunnite Muslims, viz. Ḥanafite, Mālikite, Shāfi‘ite and Ḥanbalite. The Shi‘ites’ two schools are Ja‘farite and Zaydite.

19 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 604–606.

20 Qur’ān, 3: 110.

21 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 608–610.

22 Qur’ān, 3: 114.

The preceding verse 3:113 describes that all the People of the Book (*ahl al-kitāb*) are not alike. Among them is a community of “upright people” (*ummatun qā'imatun*) who recite the scripture day and night, believe in God and the Last Day. They enjoin what is good and forbid what is wrong.²³

So far, all the verses have commanded enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong for the unity of the community of believers. In the following verse enjoining the good and forbidding the wrong is addressed to an individual: “O my son, perform the prayer, command what is right and forbid what is wrong and bear with patience whatever befalls you” (*yā bunayya aqimi al-ṣalāt wa'mur bi al-ma'rūf wanha 'an al-munkar waṣbir 'alā mā aṣābak*).²⁴

In this verse, Luqmān²⁵ is addressing his son and giving pious counsel to command the good and forbid the wrong. Al-Zamakhsharī interprets “and bear with patience what befalls you” (*wa-ṣbir 'alā mā aṣābaka*) that in general, one should be patient if one is afflicted with hardship, but specifically more patient in case of enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong because this act is of courage and resolve.²⁶

However, it is also mentioned in the Qur'ān that: “O you who believe, on you rests (the responsibility) for your own selves. If you follow the right path those who have gone astray will not be able to do you harm” (*yā ayyuha al-ladhīna āmanū 'alaykum anfusakum lā yaḍurrukum man ḡalla idha-htadaytum*).²⁷

Some exegetes are of the view that this verse exempts them from enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong and it is not mandatory (*wājib*). However, al-Zamakhsharī differs from this interpretation and states that this verse is addressed to those believers who were concerned and sad for the unbelievers not accepting faith and prayed for them to be believers. He says that the believers are responsible for their souls and those people who have gone astray will not harm them. His interpretation of this verse is that they should not waste away themselves with grief for them and one should not abandon enjoining

²³ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1: 611–12.

²⁴ Qur'ān, 31: 17.

²⁵ Luqmān appears in the Qur'ān as a monotheist and a wise man. However, his identity is by no means certain. Muslim exegetes identify him as a Nubian, an Ethiopian or an Egyptian slave who worked as a carpenter or a shepherd. The majority of the exegetes agree that he was not a prophet. Orientalists associate him with such figures as Prometheus, Lucian and Solomon. See A.H.M. Zahniser, “Luqmān,” *EQ*, 3: 242 and B. Heller, “Luqmān,” *ET*², 5: 811.

²⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 14–16.

²⁷ Qur'ān, 5: 105.

the right and forbidding the wrong. If someone does not do it, and he is able to do it, he will not be on right path.²⁸

Conclusion

There are three main features of the Mu‘tazilites’ principle of enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong: consistency in their views, homogeneity of the principle over space and time, and activism in varying degrees.²⁹ According to al-Zamakhsharī, it is a “collective duty” (*farḍ ‘alā al-kifāya*), the fulfillment of which by some persons exempts the others in the society. It can be done only by a person who can distinguish between right and wrong and knows how to perform and pursue this duty. He states that “enjoining the right” can be both “mandatory” (*wājib*) and “recommended” (*mandūb*); however, “forbidding the wrong” is “mandatory” (*wājib*) because abstaining from the reprehensible things (*munkarāt*) is mandatory due to their evil nature. Finally, al-Zamakhsharī elaborates in greater detail the prerequisites for enjoining the right and forbidding the wrong.

²⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 304–306.

²⁹ Cook, *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong*, 224–26.

Conclusion

I examined and analyzed al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Kashshāf*, within the context of the Mu'tazilites' five principles (*al-uṣūl al-khamsa*), which are considered indispensable, and constitute the basis of their theology.

The first fundamental principle of the Mu'tazilites, the "unity of God" (*al-ta-wḥīd*) is the most important thesis of their doctrine because it is the source of all other principles. According to them, God is one and unique and He has no likeness and comparison with any one. God is beyond time and place; He is not a body at all but only "something", a being that cannot be perceived by the senses but is exclusively known through revelation or through reason.

The Mu'tazilites were among the first Muslim theologians to deal with the issue of divine attributes in detail. They did not make any distinction between attribute and description (*ṣifa* and *waṣf*),¹ but differentiated between types of attributes, namely "the attributes of the essence" (*al-ṣifat al-dhāt* or *al-nafs*), and "the attributes of the act" (*al-ṣifāt al-fi'lī*). The attributes of the essence of God are *ʿilm* (knowledge), *qudra* (power), and *ḥayy* (life). God is knowing by His essence, powerful by His essence, and living by His essence. These attributes are eternal and unchangeable like God Himself and not separate from His essence, but are identical with the essence.² The attributes of the act exist by the will and power of God, which are "will" (*mashī'a*), "hearing" (*sam'*), "seeing" (*baṣar*), and "perception" (*naẓar*). These attributes describe God's temporal relationship to change, for they come into being when God acts and cease when His action ceases. They do not subsist in Him.

With regard to God's attributes, al-Zamakhsharī agrees with Wāṣil b. 'Aṭā', who denies attributes of knowledge, power, will and life.³ He defines "power" (*quwwa*) as strength in physique and its opposite is "weakness" (*du'f*). The power of human beings, by all means is right when an action is performed by an agent which is contrary to weakness. However, God is described with the power meaning His omnipotence, and He is more powerful than human beings because His power emanates from His essence of which they are not capable.⁴ Similarly, he states that God knows by His essence and He is certainly not restrained in it. So, his interpretation of God's knowledge is in accordance with

1 Al-Bāqillānī, *Kitāb al-Tamhīd*, 217.

2 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1: 30.

3 Al-Shahrastānī, *Milal*, 1:31.

4 Qur'ān, 41:15; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5:375–76.

the Mu'tazilite principles.⁵ He interprets "the living" (*al-ḥayy*) as the eternal for whom there is no possibility of cessation, and does not say that God is living by His essence because the Mu'tazilites do not believe in the "attribute of existentialism" (*ṣifat wujūdiyya*).⁶

Al-Zamakhsharī, like most Mu'tazilites, believes that the Qur'ān was created. According to him, the interpretation of the verse: "We have made it an Arabic Quran that perchance you may understand" (*inna ja'alnāhu Qur'ānan 'arabiyyan la'allakum ta'qilūn*) is that "We have created it in Arabic not in foreign language" (*khalāqnāhu 'arabiyyan ḡayra a'jamī*).⁷ His view is so emphatic that he mentions in the preface of *al-Kashshāf* that God is far above to transmit it (the Qur'ān) from the beginning and eternity, and He marked the occurrence of everything from nonexistence.⁸ Hence, it is not God's essence and does not exist from eternity rather it is an incident of phenomena and created.

The Qur'ān describes God as transcendent who is different from all existing things. However, there are anthropomorphic expressions in the Qur'ān such as God's hands, eyes, face, divine actions associated with God's body such as seeing, hearing, speaking, coming and sitting on the throne. Also, the Qur'ān ascribes to God human feelings such as mercy, anger and satisfaction. Al-Zamakhsharī emphasizes the absolute uniqueness and transcendence of God and denies His description anthropomorphically in any form, such as direction, place, vision, image, body, face, hand, eye, domain, movement, extinction, change, feeling, speaking, sitting, coming or appearing.⁹ He considers the anthropomorphic verses in the Qur'ān as allegorical or figurative expressions to symbolize God's attributes and actions. He deals with such verses by the method of *ta'wīl* or metaphorical interpretation. He interprets single words in a Qur'ānic text according to a secondary or metaphorical meaning found elsewhere in the Qur'ān. By the "hand" (*yad*),¹⁰ he means God's blessing (*ni'ma*),¹¹ and by His "eye" (*'ayn*)¹² he means His knowledge (*'ilm*).¹³ According to him, God's "face" (*wajh*)¹⁴ means God's very essence,¹⁵ God's sitting on the throne¹⁶ indicates a symbol of His au-

5 Qur'ān, 22:70; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 4:210.

6 Qur'ān, 2:255; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:480.

7 Qur'ān, 43:3; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 5: 424–25.

8 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:95.

9 Schmidkte, *Mu'tazilite Creed of al-Zamakhsharī*, 16–18.

10 Qur'ān, 3: 26,73; 5: 64; 23: 88; 36: 83; 38: 75; 48: 10; 57: 29; 67: 1.

11 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 167, 218.

12 Qur'ān, 11: 37; 20: 39; 23: 27; 52: 48; 54: 14.

13 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 165, 195.

14 Qur'ān, 28: 88; 55: 27.

15 Al-Ash'arī, *Maqālāt*, 521.

thority, power and control upon everything.¹⁷ Similarly, al-Zamakhsharī interprets the verse: “God has sealed their hearts and their hearing, and on their sight is a veil,”¹⁸ “metaphorically” (*majāzan*) and says that neither “seal” (*khatm*) nor “cover” (*taghshia*) of the heart has been used in a literal sense. He further elaborates that linking of “sealing their hearts” to God is “evil” (*qabīḥ*) and God is above doing any evil act.

The Qur’ān does not explicitly and specifically mention about the “vision of God” (*ru’yat Allāh*) except at one place,¹⁹ and the Mu’tazilites deny the “vision of God” (*ru’yat Allāh*). Al-Zamakhsharī also denies the vision of God, and defines the “vision” (*baṣar*) as “the subtle substance” (*al-jawhr al-laṭīf*) which is conveyed by God to the sense of perception (*ḥāssat al-naẓar*) by which all the perceived things can be penetrated. It means that the vision has neither any linkage with Him nor can it perceive Him because He is the Supreme Being (*muta’āl*) who cannot be penetrated in His essence. The vision has linkage with those things which comprise sides or directions, primary or secondary, like bodies and forms. Since God is neither a body nor a form, vision cannot penetrate Him.²⁰

According to al-Zamakhsharī, the second principle of “justice” (*‘adl*) emphasizes God’s justice and His goodness towards human beings. He quotes from the Qur’ān that those who fulfill their covenants with God, persevere in seeking the way of their Lord, remain steadfast in prayers and ward off evil with good, for them is the recompense of paradise; whereas those who break their covenant with God, and spread corruption on the earth, for them is an evil abode.²¹ He states that God has established and decided for all the humanity two states of affairs, either to be grateful or disbelievers. God invites the people toward Islam with rational arguments and revelation. If a person becomes grateful, it is due to success granted by God, and if he becomes disbeliever it is due to his wrong choice.²²

Al-Zamakhsharī interpretation of seal (*khatm*) and conceal (*katm*) belongs to the same category of words which are used in conjunction with each other. He states that neither seal (*khatm*) nor cover (*taghshia*) has been used in a literal sense but metaphorically, and linking of sealing their hearts to God is evil and God is above all such acts. He gives the following reasons: First, it is due to

16 Qur’ān, 7: 54; 10: 3; 13: 2; 20: 5; 25: 59; 32: 4; 57: 4.

17 Al-Ash’arī, *Maqālāt*, 211.

18 Qur’ān 2:7.

19 Qur’ān, 75: 22–23.

20 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 2: 382–83.

21 Qur’ān: 13:20–25.

22 Qur’ān: 76:3; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 6: 275.

the unbelievers' persistence in denying the truth that God informs them that their hearts have been sealed. The seal is a consequence of the unbelievers' deeds and it is not pre-ordained. Second, seal should be interpreted metaphorically, since their hearts are empty of intelligence. God does not want to prevent them from believing or to force them not to believe because He is above all these things. Third, in a real sense, Satan is the one who seals the hearts of the unbelievers. God has ascribed the seal to Himself because He is the one who empowered Satan or the unbelievers to do so. Fourth, since there is no possibility of them being believers except by the force and the constraint, God expresses their impossibility with seal (*khatm*) due to persistence in their disbelief.

In order to avoid attributing of evil to God, al-Zamakhsharī maintains that "God does not burden a soul beyond its capacity,"²³ and He is not unjust to His servants.²⁴ For al-Zamakhsharī, God's praising Himself that He could not do evil to His servants, would have no sense if He imposed burden on a soul beyond his capacity. In addition, God is just and enjoins justice;²⁵ therefore, He would impose upon them which is really below their capacity.²⁶

The third principle: "the promise and the threat" (*al-wa'd wa al-wa'id*) states that God will reward the believers for their good deeds and punish the unbelievers for their bad deeds. Al-Zamakhsharī, in conformity with the Mu'tazilites' viewpoint believes that it is incumbent upon God to carry His promise and threat because He is just. God promises recompense to those who obey Him and threatens punishment to those who disobey Him.

Al-Zamakhsharī agrees with the Mu'tazilites' concept of "constraint" (*iljā'*) which is intended to resolve the issue of the discrepancy between what God wills people to do and what they actually do. It is impossible that God wills the acts of disobedience in any manner and commands that which He does not will to be and forbids that which He wills to be. God sometimes wills that which is not, and things have come to be which He has not willed. However, He has power to prevent that which he does not will and to constrain humans to perform what He wills.

Al-Zamakhsharī adheres to the concept of the concept of "the nullification and the atonement" (*al-iḥbāt wa al-takfīr*) which is related to obedience (*ṭā'a*) and disobedience (*ma'ṣiya*). According to this concept, a person's good deeds and bad deeds are weighed, if his good deeds are more than his bad deeds, the punishment of the bad deeds is cancelled and he will receive eternal reward;

²³ Qur'ān, 2: 233, 286; 6: 152; 7: 42; 23: 62; 65: 7.

²⁴ Qur'ān, 50: 29.

²⁵ Qur'ān, 16: 90.

²⁶ Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:464.

on the other hand, if his bad deeds are more than good deeds, reward of the good deeds is cancelled and he will get eternal punishment.

Al-Zamakhsharī believes that repentance is the only way to be forgiven by God for a person who commits major sins. If he dies unrepentant he will abide in the fire forever. He is of the opinion that if someone avoids the major sins, God will forgive the minor sins, and the reward of good deeds is nullified by committing the major sins. Al-Zamakhsharī also believes in intercession but differs from the orthodox point of view, which considers that intercession will be for all the Muslims including those who commit the major sins. In his opinion, intercession will be granted to the believers only with God's permission, and not to those who are the wrong-doers and commit the major sins.

The fourth principle: "the position between the two positions" (*al-manzila bayna al-manzilatayn*), literally means the intermediate position between belief and unbelief. Al-Zamakhsharī agrees with this principle, and interprets the verse: "And give happy tidings to the believers who do deeds of righteousness that for them is a great reward," as follows: If you ask: "How the righteous believers and unbelievers are mentioned, whereas the sinful are not referred to?" He responds that at the time when the principle of the intermediate position between belief and unbelief was formulated, people were divided into either pious believers or polytheists. It was after this principle that the Mu'tazilites placed the "sinful people" in the intermediate position between belief and unbelief.²⁷

Al-Zamakhsharī believes that the major sins nullify the obedience (acts of worship), and whosoever dies persisting in the major sins will be in the hellfire forever. In this world, such a person will be in the intermediate position, and can neither be called a believer, nor an unbeliever, polytheist and hypocrite; rather he can be called a transgressor.²⁸

According to al-Zamakhsharī, belief consists of performing righteous deeds and avoiding bad deeds. He elaborates that belief consists of three elements: confession by heart, affirmation by tongue and confirmation by deeds. He is of the opinion that sins consist of two categories: major and minor. Major sins are those offences that deserve punishment and it is not abolished until the repentance is made. Indecent and vile offences and associating others with God are also major sins. The minor sins are venial offences and petty in their nature, such as pollution or dirt.

Al-Zamakhsharī upholds the fifth principle: "enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong" (*al-amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*). He is of

²⁷ Qur'ān, 17: 9; al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 3:496–97.

²⁸ Al-Zamakhsharī, *Minhāj*, 36, 73.

the opinion that it is a collective duty (*farḍ kifāya*), the fulfillment of which by some persons exempts the others in the society, and considers enjoining of the right can be both mandatory and recommended, while forbidding of the wrong is mandatory.

Since its inception, *al-Kashshāf* has been subject to both explication and orthodox Sunnī criticism which centered on the basic principles of the Muʿtazilite theology. Those who have denounced and criticized it include leading scholars of Sunnī orthodoxy. However, at the same time, al-Zamakhsharī's *tafsīr* has been cited, adopted, and commented upon by the orthodox community and there is an almost endless number of glosses, superglosses, and supercommentaries on it that *al-Kashshāf* has become the classical Muʿtazilite exegetical text.

All the scholars, contemporary of al-Zamakhsharī and of the subsequent generations, are in agreement that *al-Kashshāf* is an exquisite, elegant, eloquent, lucid and sublime commentary of the Qurʾān.²⁹ Some of the commentators cautioned their readers to be aware of *al-Kashshāf*'s "ideas derived from the Muʿtazilite principles,"³⁰ "Muʿtazilite contents and their propagation,"³¹ "its intrigues and secret mechanitions."³² Some of them have written to the extent "that the author of *al-Kashshāf* is heretic and whatever is written in it should be erased."³³ Nöldeke speaks of "[al-Zamakhsharī's] most clever and over-subtle investigations of philosophical and theological matters" in the *Kashshāf*,³⁴ Nassau Lees refers to the Muʿtazilite doctrines that "pervade the whole Preface,"³⁵ and Goldziher states that in the *Kashshāf* al-Zamakhsharī "produced a concise fundamental work for Muʿtazilite Qurʾān interpretation."³⁶

Among the prominent features of Muʿtazilite exegesis, close interconnection with Muʿtazilite theology stands out. It is common to see Muʿtazilite exegesis as "dogmatic" interpretation, since the religious doctrines of the Muʿtazilite shaped their approach towards the Qurʾān and their techniques of interpretation.³⁷

29 Al-Andalusī, *Bahjat al-nufūs*, 1:65–66; Ibn Taymiyya, *Muqaddima*, 85–86.

30 Ibn Taymiyya, *Muqaddima*, 85–86.

31 Al-Dhahabī, *al-ʿIbar*, 4: 106; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islam*, 36:489; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20: 156; al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-iʿtidāl*, 4: 78.

32 Abū Ḥayyān al-Andalusī, *Baḥr al-muḥīṭ*, 7: 81; Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddima*, 407–8; Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 7: 63–64.

33 Al-Subkī, *Muʿīd al-niʿam*, 80.

34 Nöldeke, *Geschichte des Qorāns*, xxviii.

35 *Kashshāf*, 1: 7 (Calcutta edition).

36 Ignaz Godziher, "Aus der Theologie des Fachr al-dīn al-Rāzī," *Der Islam* 3 (1912), 220.

37 Alena Kulnich, "Beyond Theology: Muʿtazilite Scholars and their authority in al-Rummānī's *tafsīr*," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 78 (2015), 135–36.

The essential role of theology for Mu'tazilite exegesis is emphasized by Suleiman Mourad, who mentions that, "Mu'tazilism is about rheology. To establish whether or not *al-Kashshāf* is a Mu'tazilite commentary, one needs only to determine whether, and in what manner, al-Zamakhsharī defends some or all of the five principles of Mu'tazilite theology".³⁸

The extensive analysis of al-Zamakhsharī's interpretations of the Qur'ānic verses in *al-Kashshāf* demonstrates beyond any doubt that *al-Kashshāf* is in complete accord with the five principles of the Mu'tazilites. The significance of this study is, therefore, that it highlights the theological components of *al-Kashshāf*, and augments our knowledge of the Mu'tazilite tafsir tradition and theology, and of al-Zamakhsharī as a Mu'tazilite scholar.

³⁸ Suleiman A. Mourad, "Review of Andrew Lane's Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary: The *Kashshāf* of Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), *Journal of Semitic Studies* 52 (2007), 409–10.

Appendix

Al-Zamakhsharī's Scholarly Contribution

Al-Zamakhsharī's scholarly works can be divided into eight categories. These categories in most of the cases have been determined by the titles of the books but there are some titles which are not definitive in identifying the subject matter of the book. This division, however, facilitates to understand al-Zamakhsharī's interests his scholarly works. These eight categories are: exegesis, traditions, theology, jurisprudence, grammar, lexicography, and literature. There are some titles of which it is difficult to determine what category they belong because their contents are unknown.¹

I Exegesis

1 *Al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl wa 'uyūn al-aqāwīl fī wujūh al-ta'wīl*

Al-Kashshāf is the *magnum opus* of al-Zamakhsharī. He explains the Qur'ān's grammatical, lexicographical and rhetorical features, variant readings and the miraculous nature (*i'jāz*) of it. I have discussed *al-Kashshāf* in greater details in Chapter 2.

2 *Risāla fī al-tafsīr*

This book is also known as *Kashf fī al-qirā'āt* and *Kashf fī al-qirā'āt al-'ashr*. It deals with the the ten canonical variant readings (*al-qirā'āt al-'ashr*) instead of

1 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168–69; al-Fāsī, *al-'Iqd al-thamīn*, 7:139–40; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt*, 4:119; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315–16; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājīm*, 53; Tāshkubrīzādā, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98–9; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Yāf'ī, *Mir'āt al-janān*, 3:269; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:487–89; Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *Muḥājāt bi-al-masā'il al-naḥwiyya*, ed. Bahija al-Ḥasanī (Baghdād: Dār al-Tarbiyya Maṭba'at Asad, 1974), 21–39; al-Juwaynī, *Manhaj al-Zamakhsharī*, 53–54; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 58–63; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 80–101; al-Shīrāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 123–31; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 17–26; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 157–77; Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt*, 1:973–6; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 12:186; Zirikli, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Jehlami, *Hadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 108–30; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*¹, 8:1205–7; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*² *Supplement*, 12:840–41; Lane, *Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary*, 267–98.

the widely accepted and recognized seven readings (*al-qirā'āt al-sab'*). This is the second book that al-Zamakhsharī composed on the Qur'ān, other than *al-Kashshāf*.²

II Traditions

1 *Al-Fā'iq fī gharīb al-ḥadīth*

Yāqūt and Ibn Khallikān are the two primary sources who list *al-Fā'iq fī gharīb al-ḥadīth* in their biographical dictionaries. Most secondary sources rely upon them and there is a great number of other biographical works that mention *al-Fā'iq*. According to Agius, *al-Fā'iq* is a lexicon of rare words used in the *ḥadīth* and divided into 28 parts. It was completed in 516/1122. It has excellent indexes containing subject, philological terms, proverbs, phonetic terms, distinguished personalities, poets and historical references. Madelung describes the book as “a large, alphabetically arranged dictionary of unusual word (in the *ḥadīth*),” where the relevant traditions are quoted and explained in detail. He is of the opinion that it is a collection of traditions with a variety of explanations and grammatical analyses. Brockelmann considers it a work in which al-Zamakhsharī “collected the peculiarities of the language of the traditions.” Versteegh states that it is “a list of expressions used in *ḥadīth*.” There is one of the earliest and most valuable manuscripts in Baghdād, copied in 56/1168, and another manuscript copied by Jāsim Muḥammad al-Rajab in Baghdād, no date is given. This book was first printed in Hyderabad in two volumes in 1324/1906. Later, it was edited by 'Alī Muḥammad al-Bajāwī and Muḥammad Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm and published in four volumes in Cairo in 1392/1971. In a long critical philological study, G. Weil discusses some phonetic and morphological structures in *al-Fā'iq*.³

² Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172; Brockelmann, al-Zamakhsharī, *Et*¹ 8:1206; Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *Et*² *Supplement*, 12:840–41; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511.

³ Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā'*, 391; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:155; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; Ibn Abi Wafa, 3:448; Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 7:63–64; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawā'id al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt*, 1:974; Ziriklī, *al-A'ām* 7:178; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn* 12:186; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112–13; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 59; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 83; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 123; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 23; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 159; Brock-

2 *Mukhtaṣar al-Muwāfaqāt bayna ahl al-bayt wa al-ṣaḥāba*

According to Ṭāshkubrīzāda, the title of the book is *al-Mukhtaṣar min al-Muwāfaqāt al-ṣaḥāba*, while Brockelmann gives the title as *Mukhtaṣar al-Muwāfaqa bayn Āl-bayt*. However, Madelung considers that the original work is that of the Mu'tazilite Zaydite traditionist Abū Sa'īd Ismā'īl b. Alī al-Sammān al-Rāzī (d. 443/1051), and al-Zamakhsharī abridged it. In his preface, al-Zamakhsharī remarks that he has removed chains of authorities (*asnāds*) and describes only the narrative parts of the traditions. According to Ḥājji Khalifa, this book was written to demonstrate the harmony between the family of the Prophet Muḥammad and his major companions. It consists of a number of traditions in which Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān praise 'Alī and *ahl al-bayt*, and 'Alī praises Abū Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthmān.⁴

3 *Mutashābih asmā' al-ruwāt*

There are many variations of the title of this book which have been reported in the primary sources. These are: *Kitab Tashabuh asma' al-ruwat*, *Mutashabih al-asma' fi 'ilm al-hadith*, *Mutashabih al-asma'* and *Mushtabih asami al-ruwat*. The title suggests that it deals with *'ilm al-rijāl*,⁵ specifically with those whose names appear to be similar and create doubts in the names. This book is not extant.⁶

elmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF*¹, 8:1206; C.H.M. Versteegh, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF*², 11:432–34.

4 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:99; Ḥājji Khalifa, *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, 2:1890; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 173; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 115; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 123; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF*¹, 8:1207; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:513; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF*² *Supplement*, 12:841.

5 *'Ilm al-rijāl* is the science devoted to the study of persons figuring in isnads of *ḥadīths* to establish their moral qualities and ascertain their truthfulness. The bibliographical information provides the necessary accuracy of the isnads and materials transmitted as well as exact identification of the names to prevent confusion between the persons of the same name. See B. Scarcia Amoretti, "Ilm al-ridjāl," *EF*² 3:1150–52.

6 Al-Andarāsbanī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 379; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:155–6; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36: 488; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315–16; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:99; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawā'id al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Hadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 117; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

4 *Khaṣā'is al-'ashara al-kirām al-barara*

Brockelmann considers it as one of the works in the field of traditions. Madelung states that al-Zamakhsharī assembled in this book biographical information and reports about the virtues and exemplary qualities of the ten companions of the Prophet Muhammad whom he had promised paradise.⁷ In this book, al-Zamakhsharī narrates each of the ten companions' lives and their virtues (*khaṣā'is*) as exemplary models to be followed by the readers. According to Agius, "It is a treatise on the manifestation of high qualities of moral values in Islam represented by ten people chosen by God." It was edited by Bahija Bāqir al-Ḥasanī in Baghdad in 1968. She has included a short biography of al-Zamakhsharī and a bibliography.⁸

III Theology

1 *Al-Minhāj fī uṣūl al-dīn*

This book has been widely mentioned by all the primary and secondary sources. However, some sources give different titles of the book such as *al-Minhāj fī uṣūl al-dīn*.

Al-Zamakhsharī in his Mu'tazilite creed was largely influenced by the doctrine of Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī, which is supported by the text. Throughout the book, he usually refrains from expressing his own preference with regard to the conflicting views of various schools on a question without ever entering the controversies. However, at some places he indicates his opinion. He mentions frequently the names of Abū 'Alī al-Jubbā'ī and Abū Hāshim al-Jubbā'ī – "the two *shaykhs*" (*al-shaykhān*), while Qāḍī 'Abd al-Jabbār is referred only once. This book is extant in at least two manuscripts of Yemenite origin.⁹ The

7 The ten companions known as al-'ashara al-mubashshara are: Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (d. 13/634), 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 23/644), 'Uthmān b. 'Affān (d. 35/656), 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661), Ṭalḥa b. 'Ubayd Allāh (d. 36/656), al-Zubayr b. al-'Awwām (d. 36/656), 'Abd al-Raḥmān b. 'Awf (d. 32/652), Sa'd b. Abi Waqqās (d. 55/675), Sa'id b. Zayd (d. 56/677) and Abū 'Ubayda b. al-Jarrāh (d. 18/639). See Wensinck, "al-'Ashara al-mubashshara," *EI*², 1:693.

8 Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 114; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 22; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EI*¹, 8:1207; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EI*² *Supplement*, 12:841.

9 Oscar Löfgren and Renato Traini, *Catalogue of the Arabic Manuscripts in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 1981), 2:363; P. Voorhoeve, *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts in*

final section dealing with the imamate is lacking in both manuscripts, because it does not agree with the Zaydite doctrine. However, the chapter on the Imamate from *Kitāb al-Murshid* written by Sayyid Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Abī al-Futūh al-ʿAlawī al-Ḥasanī has been added. It is written in the form of questions and answers (*masāʾil wa-ajwiba*) and covers the fundamentals of Muʿtazilite *kalām*. This book has been edited and translated into English by Sabine Schmidtke.¹⁰

IV Jurisprudence

1 *Al-Rāʾid fī al-farāʾiḍ*

This book is also known as *al-Rāʾid fī ʿilm al-farāʾiḍ* and *Farāʾiḍ al-fawāʾid*. According to Ibn Khallikān's editors the title is *Dāllat al-nāshid wa-al-rāʾid fī ʿilm al-farāʾiḍ*. The book has not survived. The title indicates that it deals with jurisprudence.¹¹

2 *Ruʾūs al-masāʾil fī al-fiqh*

Many primary and secondary sources mention this book. Yāqūt gives the title of the book as *Rūḥ al-masāʾil*. Agius mentions both the titles, *Rūḥ al-masāʾil* and *Ruʾūs al-masāʾil* and considers that it deals with some principles of *al-fiqh*. The book edited by ʿAbd Allāh Nadhīr Aḥmad is based on a microfilm copy from Umm al-Qurā University of Mecca of a unique original manuscript held by the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin. The subtitle of this edition is *al-masāʾil al-khi-*

the Library of the University of Leiden and Other Collections in the Netherlands (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 1980), 214.

10 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:156; al-Dhahabī, *Tāʾriḫ al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Hadāʾiq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 114; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 58; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 20; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī ki tafsīr*, 173; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:513; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EI² Supplement*, 12:840–41.

11 Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Tāʾriḫ al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-saʿāda*, 2:98; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawāʾid al-bahīyya* 167; Jehlami, *Hadāʾiq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; Dayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 83; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 20; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī ki tafsīr*, 173.

lāfiyya bayna al-Ḥanafīyya wa-al-Shāfi'īyya.¹² The book describes the principles of jurisprudence and the differences between the Shāfi'ī and Ḥanafī schools. It consists of 404 questions and is divided into forty-two books.¹³

3 *Shāfi' al-'ayī min kalām al-Shāfi'ī*

This is another book that has not survived. According to al-Ḥūfī, the title of the book might be *Shāfi' al-'ayy min kalām al-Shāfi'ī* or *Shāfi' al-'ayyīy*. The title suggests that it was written in response to either the scholastic theology or some legal principles (*uṣūl al-fiqh*) of Shāfi'ī school. It may be pointed out that al-Zamakhsharī was a Ḥanafī Mu'tazilite.¹⁴

4 *Shaqā'iq al-Nu'mān fī ḥaqā'iq al-Nu'mān*

This book has some variations in the title such as, *Shaqā'iq al-Nu'mān fī manāqib al-Imām al-Nu'mān* and *Shaqā'iq al-Nu'mān fī manāqib Abū Ḥanīfa*. Most probably, the original title is *Shaqā'iq al-Nu'mān fī ḥaqā'iq al-Nu'mān*, however, the book has not survived. It praises the virtues and outstanding qualities of Nu'mān b. Thābit Abū Ḥanīfa, founder of the Ḥanafī school of jurisprudence. As mentioned above, al-Zamakhsharī was a Ḥanafī Mu'tazilite.¹⁵

12 Lane, *Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary*, 293.

13 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn al-Qutlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Zirikli, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 58; Dayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 83; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 21; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 173.

14 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn Qutlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadhrat al-dhahab*, 3:119; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 58; Dayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 127; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 26; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

15 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Lucknawi, *al-Fawā'id al-bahiyya* 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 58; Dayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 174.

V Grammar

1 *Al-Aḥājī al-naḥwīyya*

Some primary sources give other titles of the book. Yāqūt gives the title of *al-Muḥājīāt wa-mutamīm mahāmm arbāb al-ḥājāt fī al-aḥājī wa-al-alghāz*. The title given by Ibn Khallikan is *al-Muḥājāt bi al-masā'il al-naḥwīyya*. This book is published with both titles: *al-Muḥajat bi-al-masail al-naḥwīyya*, edited by Bahija al-Ḥasanī and *al-Aḥājī al-naḥwīyya*, edited by Muṣṭafā al-Ḥadri.¹⁶ According to Agius, *al-Aḥājī al-naḥwīyya*, is a philological treatise that discusses some grammatical problems found in the Qur'ān, ḥadīth, and classical poetry; [it has] excellent indexes of Qur'ānic verses, hadith, poetic lines, authors and subject. Versteegh states that it deals with the issues involving grammatical controversies.¹⁷

2 *Al-Mufaṣṣal fī ṣan'at al-i'rāb*

According to Brockelmann, *al-Mufaṣṣal fī ṣan'at al-i'rāb* is one of al-Zamakhsharī's best known, most important and popular grammatical treatise which was written in 513–515/1119–1121. He lists 24 commentaries, of which the best-known is of Ibn Ya'īsh. He describes it as a work “celebrated for its succinct yet exhaustive and lucid exposition,” and as “textbook [for the teaching] of grammar, classic due to its terse and clear formulation of the material.” Versteegh states that the most obvious difference between this highly popular work and other grammatical writings, starting with the *Kitāb Sibawayh*, is the arrangement of material. Instead of classic arrangement in syntax, morphology and phonology, al-Zamakhsharī divided the material into four sections: nouns, verbs, particles and derived words (*mushtarak*). This book, though elementary, has considerably influenced the Western grammars of Arabic. It formed the

16 Lane, *Traditional Mu'tazilite Qur'ān Commentary*, 267.

17 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; al-Laknawī, *Fawā'id al-bahīyya*, 167; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 111; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 60; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 84; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 127; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 19; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī ki tafsīr*, 171; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511; Versteegh, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *EF*, 11:431.

basis for Caspari's grammar and through its English translation by Wright, for all subsequent grammars of Arabic.¹⁸

3 *Al-Mufrad wa-al-mu'allaf*

It is also known as *al-Mufrad wa-al-murakkab* and deals with compound terms. According to Brokelmann and Versteegh, it is a treatise on syntax. There are two editions of this book: one in *Risālatān li-al-Zamakhsharī* which is an offprint of Bahija al-Ḥasanī and published by Matba'at al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Irāqī, Baghdad in 1967, and the other published by Dār al-Hānī, Cairo in 1990.¹⁹

4 *Nukat al-a'rāb fī gharīb al-i'rāb*

This book is listed only by Yāqūt and it deals with peculiarities in Qur'ānic grammatical analysis. This book was edited by Muḥammad Abū al-Futūḥ Sharīf and published by the Dār al-Ma'ārif, Cairo in 1985. In this edition, each chapter is titled as *fī gharīb i'rāb sūra* followed by the name of the *sūra* under discussion. In addition, the text is arranged in the form of questions and answers (*masāl wa-ajwiba*).²⁰

18 Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā'*, 391; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:152; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:487; Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 7:63–64; Ibn Qutlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya* 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; Ibn al-'Imad, *Shadhrat*, 3:119; Lucknawī, *al-Fawa'id al-bahiyya*, 167; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt*, 1:975; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām* 7:178; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 12:186; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 114; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 60; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 84; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 24; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 160; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:509; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*¹, 8:1206; Versteegh, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*², 11:431.

19 Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā'*, 391; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:99; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadhrat al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawa'id al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 115; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 18; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*¹, 8:1206; Versteegh, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*², 11:433.

20 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām* 7:178 al-Laknawī, *Fawa'id al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 117; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 20; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:509.

5 *Risāla fī kalimat al-shahāda*

According to Agius, it is also known as *Mas'ala fī kalimat shahāda*. It is not mentioned in any biographical dictionaries. It was edited by Bahija al-Ḥasanī and published in *Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Irāqī*. According to her, it is not a treatise on doctrine (*'aqīda*) but rather on grammar. In this *Risāla*, al-Zamakhsharī deals with the grammatical analysis of the first phrase of *shahāda*, that is, *lā ilāha illā Allāh*.²¹

6 *Sharḥ abyāt al-Kitāb*

This book also has variant titles in the biographical dictionaries. Yāqūt gives the title *Sharḥ Kitāb Sibawayh*, Ibn Khallikān as *Sharḥ abyāt Kitāb Sibawayh* and Ibn al-'Imād as *Sharḥ abyāt Sibawayh*. This book is a commentary on some of the lines of poetry (*shawāhid*) used by Sibawayh in his *Kitāb*, however, it is not a commentary on the entire book of Sibawayh.²²

7 *Sharḥ al-Mufaṣṣal*

This book has been mentioned in a number of biographical dictionaries. Other than *Sharḥ al-Mufaṣṣal*, there are three more titles of this book. Agius and al-Ḥufī give the title as *Sharḥ ba'd mushkilāt al-Mufaṣṣal*, while al-Khavansari gives *Sharḥ mushkilāt al-Mufaṣṣal*. Yāqūt mentions two titles the *Sharḥ al-Mufaṣṣal* and a *Ḥāshiya 'ala al-Mufaṣṣal*. Al-Zamakhsharī wrote a *ḥāshiya* (gloss) as well as a *sharḥ* (commentary) on *al-Mufaṣṣal*. There are many commentaries on *al-Mufaṣṣal* available, but the one written by the author is not extant.²³

21 Abū al-Qāsim Maḥmūd b. 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, "Risalatan li al-Zamakhsharī," ed. Bahija al-Ḥasanī, *Majallat al-Majma' al-'Ilmī al-'Irāqī* 15 (1387/1967), 121–28; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 117; al-Ḥufī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 59; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 83; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 19; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172.

22 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawā'id al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥufī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 60; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 84; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 19; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

23 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; al-Laknawī, *Fawā'id al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥa-*

8 *Al-Unmudhaj*

Almost all the primary sources and secondary works mention that *al-Unmudhaj* is an abstract or abridgement of al-Zamakhsharī's *al-Mufaṣṣal*. Brockelmann describes it as a "shorter grammar, an extract from the *Mufaṣṣal*" and a "short handbook" that was very popular. Agius is also of the same opinion that this book being "an abstract of *al-Mufaṣṣal* attained great popularity." It was edited and published by J. Broch, Christiana in 1867 and reviewed and corrected by A. Fischer in 1910.²⁴

VI Lexicography

1 *Asās al-balāgha*

Asās al-balāgha is a dictionary of the classical language remarkable for its methodical arrangement. It gives special consideration to the metaphorical meanings of the words. Al-Zamakhsharī elaborates the meaning of some vocabulary by citing synonyms with examples and lines of poetry, the variant usages of simple and derived nouns and verbs. The book is divided into sections arranged in alphabetical order and the vocabulary stemming from the different roots is given. Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī writes that, "al-Zamakhsharī's book *Asās al-balāgha* is one of the finest books in which he expressed and distinguished between the real and metaphorical meanings of the words used singularly or compositely in an unprecedented manner."²⁵

It was first printed in two volumes in Cairo by Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya in 1299/1882 and 1341/1922. Then it was published in 1311/1893 in Lucknow and in 1385/1965 in Beirut and in Cairo in 1398/1977. An abstract of *al-Asās* entitled *Gharās al-Asās* was written by Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī (d. 852/1448) and a critique

dā'iḳ al-Ḥanaḫfiyya, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 113; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 26; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

24 Al-Andarashbānī, *Sirat al-Zamakhsharī*, 379; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawā'id al-bahīyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iḳ al-Ḥanaḫfiyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt*, 1:973; Zirikli, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 119; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 60; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 84; al-Shīrāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 127; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 18; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 162; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:510; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*¹, 8:1206; Versteegh, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*², 11:433.

25 Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 7:63–64.

of *al-Asās* was written by Ḥusayn ‘Alī Maḥfūz. In a long critical philological study, G. Weil discusses some phonetic and morphological structures in *al-Asās*.²⁶

2 *Al-jibāl wa-al-amkina wa-al-miyāh*

The title of *al-jibāl wa-al-amkina wa-al-miyāh* is known by five different variations in its name. According to Yāqūt, the title is *Kitāb al-jibāl wa al-amkina*. Ṭashkubrīzāda gives the title as *Kitāb Asmā’ al-awdiya wa-al-jibāl*, while al-Shīrāzī and Ibrāhīm give the title as *Kitāb al-Amkina wa al-jibāl wa al-miyāh*. Brockelmann gives two titles of the book: *Kitāb al-Amkina wa-al-jibāl wa al-miyāh* and *Kitāb al-Amkina wa-al-jibāl wa-al-miyāh wa-al-biqā’ al-mashhūra fi ash’ār al-‘arab*. Madelung gives the title as *Kitāb al-Amkina wa al-jibāl*. According to Madelung, this book is “a small dictionary of Arabic geographical names.” Ḍayf states that it contains the names of well-known places referred to in the Arab poetry. Ibrāhīm al-Sāmara’ī, in the preface of his edition suggests that al-Zamakhsharī drew on the pre-Islamic *mukhḍaram*²⁷ and Islamic poets and his main source were Ibn Wahhās and al-Aṣma’ī. According to Brockelmann and Agius, it was first published in Leiden by M. Salverda de Grave in 1856. Recently, it was edited by al-Sāmara’ī and printed by Dār ‘Ammār, ‘Ammān in 1999.²⁸

26 Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-udabā’*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a’yān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:156; Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Lisān al-mizān*, 7:63–64; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssirīn*, 41; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssirīn*, 2:315; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:98; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *Fawā’id al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu’jam al-maṭbū’āt*, 1:973; Ziriklī, *al-A’lām* 7:178. Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 111; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 59; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 85; al-Shīrāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 128; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 18; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 163; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511; Brockelmann, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *El*¹, 8:1206; Versteegh, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *El*², 11:433.

27 *Mukhḍaram* is a class of poets whose lives spanned both the pre-Islamic and Islamic periods. Born and raised in pre-Islamic (*jāhiliyya*) and after the rise of Islam, *mukhḍaram* poets responded to the new religion in a variety of ways. Some greeted it with hostility and others with genuine acceptance. See R. Jacobi, “Mukhḍaram,” *El*², 7:516.

28 Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbā’*, 391; Yāqūt, *Mu’jam al-udabā’*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa’āda*, 2:99; Jehlami, *Ḥadā’iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu’jam al-maṭbū’āt*, 1:974; Ziriklī, *al-A’lām* 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 113; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 59; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 85; al-Shīrāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 123; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 18; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 164; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*,

3 *Mu'jam al-ḥudūd*

Almost all biographical dictionaries include *Mu'jam al-ḥudūd* in the works of al-Zamakhsharī, but it has not survived. Brockelmann and al-Shīrāzī do not mention this book in their listings. Al-Ḥufī and Ḍayf are of the opinion that this book deals with jurisprudence based on the juridical meaning of *ḥudūd* which seems to be not correct.

The word *ḥadd* also means “case” for a noun (*rafʿ, naṣb, jar*) and “class, category” for a word, as when a verb is said to be “of the class of *ḍaraba* (*min ḥadd ḍaraba*).”²⁹ In this case, *Mu'jam al-ḥudūd* appears to be a dictionary of words categories which was the main field of al-Zamakhsharī. It may be mentioned that the grammarians, al-Farrā' and al-Rummānī composed works entitled *Kitāb al-ḥudūd*.³⁰

4 *Muqaddimat al-adab*

Muqaddimat al-adab is an Arabic-Persian dictionary and Arabic grammar dedicated to the Sipāsālār Atsiz b. Khwārazmshāh. (d. 551/1156). According to Brockelmann, al-Zamakhsharī made the Arabic vocabulary available to his countrymen with explanations in Persian. Agius states that there are seven manuscripts of this book at various places. The first European edition of the book entitled *Samachsharii Lexicon Arabicum Persicum* was edited by Godfrey Wetzstein and published in Paris in 1850. The University of Tehran published it in 1963 under the title of *Pishrow-e Adab (Muqaddimat al-adab)* which was edited with an index of Arabic and Persian words by Moḥammad Kāzem Emām. A facsimile of an interlinear translation of *Muqaddimat al-adab* into old Khorezmian language as well as Persian and Turkish entitled *Horezmce Tercümeli Muqaddimat al-adab* (part two) was published by A.Z. Velidi in Istanbul in 1951. The work

1:510; Brockelmann, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *EF*¹, 8:1206; Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *EF*² *Supplement*, 12:840–41; Versteegh, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *EF*², 11:433.

29 Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, 2:525, at the root ḥ-d-d.

30 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 4:1827; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Zirīklī, *al-A'lām* 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 115; al-Ḥufī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 58; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 84; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī ki tafsīr*, 176. See R. Blachere, “al-Farrā',” *EF*², 2: 807; M. Bernard and G. Troupeau, “Ḳiyās,” *EF*², 5: 242; and B. Carra de Vaux, J. Schacht and A.M. Goichon, “Ḥadd,” *EF*², 3: 20–22.

is divided into five sections: nouns, verbs, particles, inflexion of nouns and inflexion of verbs, however, in Wetzstein's edition, it consists only of the first two sections. J. Benzing wrote in *Das Chwaresmische Sprachmaterial einer Handschrift der Muqaddimat al-adab von Zamaxsari* about the Khorezmian language which was published in Wiesbaden in 1968. Benzing gives a detailed survey of the number of translations and interpretations of *Muqaddimat al-adab*. A translation into Turkish under the title *Aksá al-Ereb fî Tercümet-i Muqaddimat il-Edeb* by Aḥmad Ishāq was published in Istanbul in 1313/1895 and it also includes marginal notes by the editor about the Turkish gloss in *al-Muqaddima*.³¹

5 *Nuzhat al-muta'annis wa nuzhat al-muqtabis*

Among the biographical authors, Yāqūt and al-Qiftī mention this title. According to Brockelmann, it belongs to *adab* literature and it is kind of "lexikographische Bellettristik," preserved in the Aya Sofia.³²

VII Literature

1 *A'jab al-'ajab fī sharḥ Lāmiyyat al-'Arab*

A'jab al-'ajab fī sharḥ Lāmiyyat al-'Arab is a commentary by al-Zamakhsharī on the pre-Islamic poet al-Shanfarah's *qaṣida Lāmiyyat al-'Arab*.³³ Brockelmann

31 Al-Andarabānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 379; Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:99; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt*, 1:976; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 115–16; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 85; al-Shīrāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 128; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 22; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 163; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *Et*¹, 8:1206; Versteegh, "al-Zamakhsharī," *Et*², 11:433.

32 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 117; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 20; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:512; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *Et*¹, 8:1207.

33 Thābit ('Amr) b. Mālik al-Shanfarā was one of the pre-Islamic poets; however, details relating to his life are sparse and contradictory and marked by anecdotes. His *qaṣida*, *Lāmiyyat al-'Arab* is "the most accomplished specimen of the poetry of the ṣa'ālīk," which has aroused great interest since the first decades of the third/ninth century, and numerous *sharḥs* have been written about it. Noldeke, Krenkow, F. Gabrieli and Blachere expressed serious doubts about its authen-

states that it was printed with the commentary of Mubarrad alone in 1324/1906 and together with a series of other commentaries in 1328/1910 in Cairo. Agius mentions a unique manuscript of Shanfara's *qaṣida Lāmiyyat al-'Arab* found in Baghdād, but it is undated. Also, there are printed editions in Istanbul (1300/1882) and Damascus (1392/1972). Al-Ḥufī concurs with Agius and adds that the first edition was published in Istanbul (Qusṭanṭīniyya), by the Matba'at al-Jawā'ib. In addition, Shanfarā's and al-Ṭughrā'ī's *al-Lāmiyyatān* commented by al-Zamakhsharī was edited and printed by 'Abd al-Mu'īn al-Malūhī at Damascus in 1966. The two *qaṣidas* are individually Shanfarā's *Lāmiyyat al-'Arab* and al-Ṭughrā'ī's *Lāmiyyat al-'Ajam*. However, biographical sources do not mention that al-Zamakhsharī composed a *sharḥ* on al-Ṭughrā'ī's *Lāmiyyat al-'Ajam*.³⁴

2 *Dīwān al-shi'r*

Dīwān al-shi'r is a collection of al-Zamakhsharī's poems. Agius says that it is also known as *Dīwān al-Zamakhsharī*. According to Ḍayf, it is a collection of five thousand verses that al-Zamakhsharī called as *Dīwān al-adab*. It is listed in most of the biographical dictionaries. Madelung states that the *Dīwān* "reflects his technical skill and understanding of the classical tradition of Arabic poetry more than an original poetical talent."³⁵

ticity, whereas G. Jacob, Brockelmann and S. Stetkevych are convinced about its authenticity. *Ṣa'ālīk* (sing. *ṣu'lūk*) were brigands, brigand-poets and mercenaries in time of need. The *ṣa'ālīk* owe their place in history mainly to their poetic talents which were without equal at the time of the *Jāhiliyya* and until the end of the Umayyad regime. A *lāmiyya* is a poem in the rhyme of the letter *lām*. See A. Arazī, "al-Shanfara," *EF*, 9: 301–3; A. Arazī, "Ṣu'lūk," *EF*, 9: 863–68; F. Gabrieli, "Adjām," *EF*, 1: 206.

34 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt*, 1:974; Zirikli, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 111; al-Ḥufī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 59; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 96–7; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 129; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 22; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 169; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF*, 8:1206; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF Supplement*, 12:840–41; Versteegh, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF*, 11:433.

35 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn Abi Wafa, 3:448; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Zirikli, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Kaḥḥāla, *Mu'jam al-mu'allifīn*, 12:186; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112; al-Ḥufī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 62; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 100–1; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 130; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 20; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *EF Supplement*, 12:840–41.

3 *Marthiyya*

It is not mentioned in any of the primary sources. However, modern research indicates that al-Zamakhsharī composed an elegy on the death of his teacher Abū Muḍar al-Ḍabbī.³⁶

4 *Al-Qaṣīda al-ba'ūdiyya*

Al-Qaṣīda al-ba'ūdiyya consists of only three verses. Al-Zamakhsharī refers it in his commentary with regard to verse 26 of chapter two of the Qur'ān. Ibn Khallikān states that al-Zamakhsharī expressed his desire that these verses be written on his tombstone.³⁷

5 *Al-Qusṭās al-mustaqīm fī al-'arūḍ*

Al-Qusṭās al-mustaqīm fī al-'arūḍ deals with the metrical structure of verses. Agius mentions that its manuscripts were found in Leiden and Patna. Bahīja al-Ḥasanī edited it and it was published in Baghdād in 1969. Ḍayf states that it was published in Najaf in 1970 entitled *al-Qusṭās al-mustaqīm fī 'ilm al-'arūḍ*.³⁸

6 *Maqāmāt and Sharḥ al-Maqāmāt*

Al-Zamakhsharī composed a series of aphorisms addressing to himself, as *yā abā al-Qāsim* (O Abū al-Qāsim!) which were known as *Maqāmāt*. It is a collection of fifty moral discourses. Later, al-Zamakhsharī wrote a *Sharḥ al-Maqāmāt* which is a commentary on each of these fifty *maqāmāt*. This work is also known as *al-*

36 Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 114; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 169; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:512; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*¹, 8:1207.

37 Al-Zamakhsharī, *al-Kashshāf*, 1:243; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:173; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 117; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 62; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 127; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 24; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172.

38 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanaḥfiyya*, 246; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 117; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 86; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 21; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 170; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511.

Nasā'ih al-kibār. According to Brockelmann, al-Zamakhsharī added five *maqāmas* after recovering from his severe illness in 512/1118. They are *maqāmas* from 46 to 50. *Maqāmas* 46 and 47 deal with grammar (*naḥw*) and prosody (*al-ʿarūḍ*) respectively. *Maqāmas* 48 “*al-qawāfiʿ*” and 49 “*al-dīwān*” are puns.³⁹ *Maqāma* 50's theme is *Ayyām al-ʿArab*.⁴⁰ Agius mentions that this work was completed in 525/1130. A valuable manuscript was found in Baghdād, while another in Madrid entitled *al-Maqāmāt al-khamsūn fī al-zuhd*. *Sharḥ al-Maqāmāt* was first printed in 1313/1895 and then in 1325/1907 in Cairo. It was translated into German by Oskar Rescher entitled *Beiträge zur Maqāmen-litteratur* and printed by Greifswald in 1913.⁴¹

7 *Aṭwāq al-dhahab*

Most of the biographical dictionaries mention this work either as *Aṭwāq al-dhahab* or as *al-Nasā'ih al-ṣighār*. Yāqūt gives both titles. It is one of the three collections of apophthegms (the others: *Nawābiḥ al-kalīm* and *Rabīʿ al-abrār*). Brockelmann says that *Aṭwāq al-dhahab* is referred to as *al-Nasā'ih al-ṣighār* by al-Zamakhsharī in the *Kashshāf*. Madelung states that the book consists of one hundred pious maxims with allusions to the Qurʾān, Sunna and proverbial expressions. It was dedicated to Ibn Wahhās and the people of Mecca. An edition of the *Aṭwāq* was printed in Cairo in 1950. It was first edited in Arabic and translated into German by J.V. Hammer entitled *Samachsharis Goldene Halsbänder Arabisch und Deutsch* and printed in Vienna in 1835. A new translation into German with notes by H.L. Fleischer was printed in Leipzig in 1835, and also another translation into German by G. Weil was published in Stuttgart in 1863. Both translations superseded that of Hammer and proved to be excellent. It was also translated into French by C. Barbier de Meynard and published in Paris in 1876. Two Turkish translations were printed in Istanbul in 1869 and 1872.

³⁹ Pun is a play of words in different sense of the same word.

⁴⁰ Brockelmann, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *ET*, 8:1207; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511.

⁴¹ Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāḥ al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:156; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; Ibn al-Qutlūbugha, *Tāj al-tarājīm* 53; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315–16; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-saʿāda*, 2:98; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawdāt al-jannāt*, 8:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadāʾiq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 59; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 91–4; al-Shirāzi, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 126; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 23; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 166; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511.

There is a translation into Persian by Vaysal of Shīrāz (d. 1262/1846). Worth mentioning are imitations entitled *Die Aṭbāq ed-dhahab* by ‘Abd al-Mu‘min b. Hibat Allāh al-Maghribī al-Iṣfahānī Shufurwa (d. 600/1203) and Abū al-Faraj b. al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200) which were pulished by Greifswald in 1914.⁴²

8 *Dīwān al-khuṭab*

Yāqūt and al-Qifṭī mention this work in their biographical dictionaries and there are a few references in the secondary sources. It is a collection of al-Zamakhsharī’s sermons or his exhortations. It has not survived.⁴³

9 *Dīwān al-tamthīl*

All the primary sources mention about this work. However, Yāqūt, Ibn al-Quṭlūbughā and Ibn al-‘Imād give a different title as *Dīwān al-tamaththul*. It is a collection of proverbial maxims.⁴⁴

10 *Al-Durr al-dā‘ir al-muntakhab fī al-kināyāt wa al-isti‘ārāt wa al-tashbihāt*

This book is not listed in any of the biographical dictionaries. Only Brockelmann, Agius and Ḍayf mention about it with variant titles, one as mentioned above and the other as *al-Durr al-dā‘ir al-muntakhab fī al-kināyāt wa al-isti‘ārāt wa al-tash-*

⁴² Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, 6:2691; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a‘yān*, 5:168; Ibn al-Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim* 53; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Suyūṭī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 41; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa‘āda*, 2:98; Ibn al-‘Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā‘iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu‘jam al-maṭbū‘āt*, 1:973; Zirīklī, *al-A‘lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 62; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 94–7; al-Shīrāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 126; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 21; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 167; Brockelmann, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *El*¹, 8:1206–7; Madelung, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *El*² Supplement, 12:840–41.

⁴³ Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

⁴⁴ Yāqūt, *Mu‘jam al-udabā’*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a‘yān*, 5:168; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Jehlami, *Ḥadā‘iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ḍayf, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 24; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 176.

bihāt al-ʿArab. It deals with a small list of similes, metaphors and allegories drawn from the usage of Arabic and its classical poetry. The only extant fragment manuscript was found in Karl Marx library at the University of Leipzig, edited by Bahija al-Ḥasanī and printed in Baghdād in 1968.⁴⁵

11 *Rabīʿ al-abrār wa-fuṣūṣ al-akhbār*

Rabīʿ al-abrār wa-fuṣūṣ al-akhbār is one of the three collections of apophthegms (the others: *Nawābiḡ al-kalim* and *Aṭwāq al-dhahab*). Some primary sources mention *Rabīʿ al-abrār* and *Fuṣūṣ al-akhbār* as two independent titles.⁴⁶ According to Agius, *Rabīʿ al-abrār* and *Fuṣūṣ al-akhbār* are the titles of two independent books. He describes that the *Rabīʿ al-abrār* is an excellent methodological collection of diverse anecdotes in one hundred chapters. About the *Fuṣūṣ al-akhbār*, he says that it has edifying and literary anecdotes. Brockelmann gives the title as *Rabīʿ al-abrār fī mā yasurrū al-khawāṭir wa-al-afkār* and states that it is a collection of apophthegms. Madelung gives the title of this book as *Rabīʿ al-abrār wa-nuṣūṣ al-akhbār*. He states that it contains extracts from literary and historical works arranged according to ninety-two topics and was written as a companion to *al-Kashshāf*. Agius mentions that according to W.M. de Slane, it is an excellent methodological collection of diverse anecdotes in one hundred chapters. A summary of *Rabīʿ al-abrār wa-fuṣūṣ al-akhbār* with additions from other sources was written by Ibn Khaṭīb al-Qāsim (d. 940/1533) and entitled *Rawḍ al-akhyār* which was published by Būlāq in Cairo in 1270/1853 and 1288/1871. It was translated into Turkish by ʿĀshiq Chelebī (d. 979/1571).⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112; Ḍayf, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 85–6; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 21; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 172; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511; Brockelmann, “al-Zamakhsharī,” *ET*, 8:1206.

⁴⁶ In five biographical dictionaries it is mentioned as one book entitled *Rabīʿ al-abrār wa-fuṣūṣ al-akhbār*, while in six biographical dictionaries, *Fuṣūṣ al-akhbār* and *Rabīʿ al-abrār* are listed independently. Ṭashkubrīzāda and al-Andarabānī list them separately, however, but both of them add another title as *al-Ziyādāt ʿalā al-fuṣūṣ*, over and above *Fuṣūṣ al-akhbār*.

⁴⁷ Al-Andarabānī, *Sīrat al-Zamakhsharī*, 379; Ibn al-Anbārī, *Nuzhat al-alibbāʾ*, 391; Yāqūt, *Muʿjam al-udabāʾ*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:156; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-saʿāda*, 2:98–9; Ibn al-ʿImād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Laknawī, *al-Fawāʿid al-bahiyya*, 167; Jehlami, *Ḥadāʾiq al-Ḥanaṭiyya*, 246; Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, 7:178; Kaḥḥāla, *Muʿjam al-muʿallifīn*, 12:186; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 113, 117; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 62; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 130; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions* 19; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 170; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:512;

12 *Al-Nawābiḡh al-kalim*

Al-Nawābiḡh al-kalim is one of the three collections of apophthegms (the others: *Rabī' al-abrār* and *Aṭwāq al-dhahab*). Agius considers *Nawābiḡh al-kalim* and *al-Kalim al-nawābiḡh* two separate books. According to him *al-Nawābiḡh al-kalim* is a collection of apophthegms while *al-Kalim al-nawābiḡh* a collection of sermons. Brockelmann lists the book as *Nawābiḡh al-kalim* and considers it as a collection of maxims. Ḍayf is of the opinion that this book is a series of brief maxims in rhymed prose. There is a translation into Ottoman Turkish but the author is unknown. It was translated into Latin and edited by H. Albert Schultens entitled *Anthologia Sententiarum Arabicarum* and published in Leiden in 1772. According to Barbier de Meynard, translation was done in a very elegant style and the edition was enriched with good references and notes. Barbier de Meynard translated it into French, under the title *Les Pensées de Zamakhsharī*. In his preface, he claims that Schultens' translation, though elegant in style, has failed at times to grasp the proper meaning of the text. Of the commentaries, the best known is that of al-Taftāzānī (d. 792/1389) entitled *al-Ni'am al-sawābiḡh*, lithographed in Istanbul in 1866, and in Cairo in 1287/1870 with glosses by Muḥammad al-Bayrūtī in Beirut in 1306/1888. A recent work on proverbs by Y.T. al-Bustānī (d. 1372/1952), under the title *Amthāl al-sharq wa-al-gharb* includes a section of *Nawābiḡh al-kalim* which was published in Cairo in 1960–61.⁴⁸

13 *Al-Mustaḡṣā fī al-amthāl*

Al-Mustaḡṣā fī al-amthāl is an extensive dictionary of Arabic proverbs which al-Zamakhsharī completed in 499/1106. According to Muḥammad 'Abd al-Mu'īd Khān, Madelung and al-Ḥūfī, there are 3,461 proverbs arranged alphabetically according to their beginnings with explanation of their origin and use. Versteegh says that it has 3,500 proverbs. Al-Zamakhsharī's contemporary Abū al-Faḍl

Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*¹, 8:1207; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*² *Supplement*, 12:840–41.

48 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:98; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Sarkis, *Mu'jam al-maṭbū'āt*, 1:976; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 113, 117; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; Ḍayf, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 90–1; al-Shīrāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 127; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 22; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 168; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:512; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*¹, 8:1207; Madelung, "al-Zamakhsharī," *El*² *Supplement*, 12:840–41.

Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Maydānī's (d. 518/1124) *Majma' al-amthāl* consists of 2,763 proverbs. Ziriklī mentions one manuscript in the library of Ḥasan Ḥusnī 'Abd al-Wahhāb in Tunis. The first edition of *al-Mustaqṣā fī al-amthāl* was published by Dā'irat al-Ma'ārif al-'Uthmāniyya, Hyderabad Deccan in 1381/1962.⁴⁹

14 *Risālat al-nāṣiḥa*

Most of the biographical dictionaries mention the *Risālat al-nāṣiḥa*. This book deals with ethics and good counsels.⁵⁰

VIII Unknown

1 *Ṣamīm al-'Arabiyya*

Most of the biographical dictionaries mention the *Ṣamīm al-'Arabiyya*. According to Agius, it is also known as *Himam al-'Arabiyya*. It is not clear in which category this book could be treated, i.e., literature, grammar or lexicography.⁵¹

49 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Ziriklī, *al-A'lām*, 7:178; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 117; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 59; al-Shirāzī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 124; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 18; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 160; Brockelmann, *GAL Supplement*, 1:511–12; Brockelmann, "al-Zamakhsharī," *Et'*, 8:1206.

50 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn al-Qutlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājīm*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 26; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 174.

51 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Suyūṭī, *Bughya*, 2:280; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ṭashkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda* 2:98; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; al-Khavānsārī, *Rawḍāt al-jannāt*, 8:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 60; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 26; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 174.

2 *Sawā'ir al-amthāl*

Most of the biographical dictionaries mention the *Sawā'ir al-amthāl*. According to Agius, it is also known as *Sawā'ir al-Islām*. This book is missing.⁵²

3 *Tasliyat al-ḍarīr*

Yāqūt, al-Qifṭī and Ṭāshkubrīzāda mention this title in their biographical dictionaries. There is no information available about the subject matter of this book.⁵³

4 *Al-Ajnās*

Yāqūt and al-Qifṭī mention this title in their biographical dictionaries. Ḍayf states that the title of the book is *al-Ajnās fī al-manṭiq*. According to al-Ḥūfī and Ḍayf, this book is on logic.⁵⁴

5 *Al-Amālī*

Yāqūt, Ibn Khallikān and al-Dāwūdī mention this title in their biographical dictionaries. However, two different titles of this book are given. Yāqūt, al-Ḥūfī and Ibrāhīm give the title as *al-Amālī fī al-naḥw*, which means that it deals with grammar. Ibn Khallikān and al-Dāwūdī provide the title of *al-Amālī fī kull funn*, which means that it deals with topics of general nature.⁵⁵

52 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:315; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ibrāhīm, *Theological Questions*, 26; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 176.

53 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ṭāshkubrīzāda, *Miftāḥ al-sa'āda*, 2:99; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 119; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ibrāhīm, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 174.

54 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 111; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 86; Ibrāhīm, *Theological Questions*, 24; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

55 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*,

6 *'Aql al-kull*

This title is mentioned only by Yāqūt. According to al-Ḥūfī, this book deals with either logic or diction. However, Ḍayf is of the opinion that the subject matter of the book is logic.⁵⁶

7 *Risālat al-mas'ama*

This book is listed by Yāqūt and al-Qiftī, and its contents are unknown. There are variations in the title of this book. Ibrāhīm refers to it as *Risālat al-mas'ama*, while Agius mentions it as *Risālat al-musa'ama*.⁵⁷

8 *Kitāb al-asmā' fī al-lughat*

This title is mentioned only by Yāqūt in primary sources. Rahman quotes the same title as mentioned by Yāqūt, but Agius gives the title as *al-Asmā'*.⁵⁸

9 *Dāllat al-nāshid*

This title is mentioned in many primary as well as secondary sources, but it has not survived.⁵⁹

3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 61; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

56 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 111; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 86; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 176.

57 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 176.

58 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 111; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

59 Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qiftī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, 36:488; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 20:156; Ibn al-Qutlubugha, *Taj al-tarajīm* 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Jehlami, *Ḥadā'iq al-Ḥanafīyya*, 246; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 58; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 176.

10 *Dīwān al-rasā'il*

This book is listed in many primary as well as secondary sources, but it has not survived either.⁶⁰

11 *Jawāhir al-lughā*

This work is mentioned by Yāqūt and al-Qifṭī only, as well as by some secondary sources. It deals with the Arabic language.⁶¹

12 *Risālat al-asrār*

This title is also listed by Yāqūt and al-Qifṭī only and by some secondary sources. However, it has not survived.⁶²

⁶⁰ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-a'yān*, 5:168; Ibn Quṭlūbughā, *Tāj al-tarājim*, 53; al-Dāwūdī, *Ṭabaqāt al-mufasssīrīn*, 2:316; Ibn al-'Imād, *Shadharāt al-dhahab*, 3:119; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 112; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ḍayf, *Jār Allāh al-Zamakhsharī*, 97; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

⁶¹ Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 113; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 60; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 25; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 175.

⁶² Yāqūt, *Mu'jam al-udabā'*, 6:2691; al-Qifṭī, *Inbāh al-ruwāt*, 3:266; Agius, *Bibliographical Notes*, 118; al-Ḥūfī, *al-Zamakhsharī*, 63; Ibrahim, *Theological Questions*, 26; Rahman, *Zamakhsharī kī tafsīr*, 176.

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